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# ÉTUDES TRADITIONNELLES

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## SPECIAL EDITION ON

# CELTISM

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**AUTO-TRANSLATED BY A.I**

PLATE I.

Menhir of Conguel at Quiberon

# THE WILD BOAR AND THE BEAR

Among the Celts, the boar and the bear symbolized respectively the representatives of spiritual authority and those of temporal power, that is to say, the two castes of Druids and Knights, equivalent, at least originally and in their essential functions, to what in India are those of the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas. As we have indicated elsewhere[1], this symbolism, of clearly Hyperborean origin, is one of the marks of the direct connection of the Celtic tradition with the primordial tradition of the present Manvantara, whatever other elements, deriving from earlier traditions but already secondary and derivative, may have been able to attach themselves to this principal current and, in a certain manner, be reabsorbed into it. What we mean here is that the Celtic tradition could plausibly be regarded as constituting one of the "points of junction" of the Atlantean tradition with the Hyperborean tradition, after the end of the secondary period during which this Atlantean tradition represented the predominant form, and as the "substitute" for the original center already inaccessible to ordinary humanity[2]; and, on this point as well, the same symbolism we have just mentioned may provide some indications that are not without interest.

Let us first note the importance also given to the symbol of the boar by the Hindu tradition, itself directly issuing from the primordial tradition and expressly affirming in the Veda its own Hyperborean origin. The boar (varāha) does not appear there only, as is well known, as the third of the ten avatāras of Vishnu in the present Manvantara; but our entire Kalpa, that is to say, the entire cycle of manifestation of our world, is designated there as Shwêta-varāha-Kalpa, the "cycle of the white boar." That being so, and if one considers the analogy that necessarily exists between the great cycle and the subordinate cycles, it is natural that the mark of the Kalpa, if one may express it thus, should be found again at

1 Autorité spirituelle et pouvoir temporel, pp. 19–20.

2 Cf. Le Roi du Monde, pp. 111 ff., notably as regards the relations of Hyperborean Tula and Atlantean Tula (Tula being one of the primary designations of spiritual centers); see also our article Atlantide et Hyperborée (October 1929).

the point of departure of the Manvantara; and that is why the polar "sacred land," seat of the primordial spiritual center of this Manvantara, is also called Vārāhī, or the "land of the boar"[3].

Moreover, since it was there that the first spiritual authority resided, of which every other legitimate authority of the same order is only an emanation, it is no less natural that the representatives of such an authority should also have received the symbol of the boar as their distinctive sign and should have retained it in the course of time; and that is why the Druids designated themselves as "boars," although, since symbolism always has multiple aspects, one may at the same time see in it, secondarily, an allusion to the isolation in which they maintained themselves with regard to the outer world, the boar being always regarded as the "solitary." It must be added, moreover, that this isolation itself, realized materially, among the Celts as among the Hindus, in the form of a retreat in the forest, is not without relation to the characteristics of "primordiality," a reflection of which must always have been maintained in every spiritual authority worthy of the function it fulfills.

But let us return to the name Vārāhī, which gives rise to particularly important remarks: it is considered as an aspect of the Shakti of Vishnu (and more especially in relation to his third avatāra), which, given the "solar" character of the latter, immediately shows its identity with the primitive "solar land" or "Syria" of which we have spoken on other occasions[4], and which is yet another designation of Hyperborean Tula, that is to say, of the primordial spiritual center. On the other hand, the root var, for the name of the boar, is found in the Nordic languages in the form bor[5]; the exact equivalent of Vārāhī is therefore "Borea," and the truth is that the usual name "Hyperborea" was employed only by the Greeks at a time when they had already lost the sense of this ancient designation; it would therefore be preferable, despite the usage that has

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3 See again on this subject Atlantide et Hyperborée (October 1929); we pointed out there that, contrary to what Saint-Yves d'Alveydre seems to have thought, this name Vārāhī in no way applies to Europe; in truth, the latter was never anything but the "Land of the Bull," which refers to a period far removed from the origins

4 See "The Science of Letters' and 'The Land of the Sun'.

5 In English bear, in German Bär.

prevailed since then, to qualify the primordial tradition not as "Hyperborean" but simply as "Borean," thereby unequivocally affirming its connection with "Borea" or the "land of the boar."

There is yet something else: the root var or vri, in Sanskrit, has the meanings "to cover," "to protect," and "to conceal"; and, as is shown by the name Varuna and its Greek equivalent Ouranos, it serves to designate the sky, both because it covers the earth and because it represents the higher worlds, hidden from the senses[6]. Now all this applies perfectly to the spiritual centers, whether because they are hidden from the eyes of the profane, or because they protect the world by their invisible influence, or finally because they are, on earth, like images of the celestial world itself. Let us add that the same root also has another meaning, that of "choice" or "election" (vara), which obviously is no less suitable for the region that is everywhere designated by names such as "land of the elect," "land of the saints," or "land of the blessed"[7].

One may have noted, in what we said earlier, the union of the two "polar" and "solar" symbolisms; but, as far as the boar properly speaking is concerned, it is the "polar" aspect that matters above all; and this moreover results from the fact that the boar formerly represented the constellation which later became the Great Bear[8]. There is, in this substitution of names, one of the marks of what the Celts symbolized precisely by the struggle of the boar and the bear, that is to say, the revolt of the representatives of temporal power against the supremacy of spiritual authority, with the various vicissitudes that followed in the course of successive historical epochs. The first manifestations of this revolt, in fact, go back much further than ordinarily known history, and even further than the beginning of the Kali-Yuga, in which it was to take on its greatest extension; that is why the name bor could be transferred

6 Cf. Le Roi du Monde, ch. 7, where we showed also that the Latin word coelum itself originally had the same meaning.

7 Let us point out again, by way of a possible comparison, the Germanic root ur, which has a meaning of "primordiality."

8 It should be born in mind that this constellation has also had many other names, among them that of the scales; but it would be beyond the range of this chapter to deal with it here.

from the boar to the bear[9], and why "Borea" itself, the "land of the boar," could consequently become, at a certain moment, the "land of the bear," during a period of predominance of the Kshatriyas, which, according to the Hindu tradition, was brought to an end by Parashu-Rāma[10].

In this same Hindu tradition, the most usual name of the Great Bear is sapta-riksha; and the Sanskrit word riksha is the name of the bear, linguistically identical to that which it bears in various other languages: Celtic arth, Greek arktos, and even Latin ursus. However, one may ask whether this is indeed the primary meaning of the expression sapta-riksha, or whether there was not rather, corresponding to the substitution we have just spoken of, a kind of superposition of etymologically distinct words, but brought together and even identified by the application of a certain phonetic symbolism. In fact, riksha also means, in a general way, a star, that is to say, in sum, a "light" (archis, from the root arch or ruch, "to shine" or "to illuminate"); and, on the other hand, the sapta-riksha is the symbolic dwelling of the seven Rishis, who, besides the fact that their name relates to "vision," thus to light, are themselves also the seven "Lights" through which the Wisdom of previous cycles was transmitted to the present cycle[11]. The connection thus established between the bear and light does not, moreover, constitute an isolated case in animal symbolism, for one encounters an entirely similar one for the wolf, both among the Celts and among the Greeks[12], from which resulted its attribution to the solar god, Belen or Apollo.

In a certain period, the name sapta-riksha was applied no longer to the Great Bear but to the Pleiades, which also comprise seven stars; this transfer from a polar constellation to a zodiacal constellation

9 In German Bär.

10 We have already had occasion to point out, in this connection, that Fabre d'Olivet and those who followed him, such as Saint-Yves d'Alveydre, seem to have made a rather strange confusion between Parashu-Rāma and Rāma-Chandra, that is to say, between the sixth and seventh avatāras of Vishnu.

11 One will note the persistence of these "seven Lights" in Masonic symbolism: the presence of the same number of persons representing them is necessary both for the constitution of a "just and perfect" Lodge and for the validity of initiatic transmission. — Let us also note that the seven stars spoken of at the beginning of the Apocalypse (I, 16 and 20) would, according to certain interpretations, be those of the Great Bear.

12 In Greek, the wolf is lukos and light luki; hence the epithet with double meaning of Lycian Apollo.

corresponds to a passage from solstitial symbolism to equinoctial symbolism, implying a change in the point of departure of the annual cycle, as well as in the order of predominance of the cardinal points that are related to the different phases of this cycle[13]. This change is here that from North to West, which refers to the Atlantean period; and this is clearly confirmed by the fact that, for the Greeks, the Pleiades were daughters of Atlas and, as such, also called Atlantides. Transfers of this kind are moreover often the cause of multiple confusions, the same names having received, according to the periods, different applications, and this as much for terrestrial regions as for celestial constellations, so that it is not always easy to determine to what they refer exactly in each case, and that this is even really possible only on the condition of relating their various "localizations" to the characteristics proper to the corresponding traditional forms, as we have just done for those of the sapta-riksha.

Among the Greeks, the revolt of the Kshatriyas was figured by the hunt of the Calydonian boar, which moreover manifestly represents a version in which the Kshatriyas themselves express their claim to attribute to themselves a definitive victory, since the boar is there killed by them; and Athenaeus reports, following earlier authors, that this Calydonian boar was white[14], which clearly identifies it with the Shwêta-varāha of the Hindu tradition[15]. What is no less significant from our point of view is that the first blow was struck by Atalanta, who, it is said, had been nourished by a bear; and this name Atalanta could indicate that the revolt had its beginning either in Atlantis itself, or at least among the heirs of its tradition[16]. On the other hand, the name Calydon is found exactly in that of Caledonia, the ancient name of Scotland: apart from any question of particular "localization," it is properly the land of the "Kaldes" or Celts[17]; and the forest of Calydon does not in reality differ

13 The transfer of the Scales into the Zodiac naturally also has a similar significance.

14 Deipnosophistarum, IX, 13.

15 It is scarcely necessary to recall that white is also the color symbolically attributed to spiritual authority; and it is known that the Druids, in particular, wore white garments.

16 There are also other curious parallels in this respect, as for example between the golden apples of the legend of Atalanta and those of the garden of the Hesperides or 'daughters of the West', who were also daughters of Atlas, as were the Pleiads.

17 It is moreover probable that this name of the Celts, like that of the Chaldeans which is identical with it, was not originally that of a particular people, but that of a sacerdotal caste exercising spiritual authority

from that of Brocéliande, whose name is still the same, although under a somewhat modified form, and preceded by the root bro or bor, that is to say, by the very name of the boar.

The fact that the bear is often taken symbolically under its feminine aspect, as we have just seen in connection with Atalanta, and as one also sees from the denominations of the constellations of the Great Bear and the Little Bear, is also not without significance as regards its attribution to the warrior caste, holder of temporal power, and this for several reasons. First, this caste normally has a "receptive" role, that is to say, a feminine one, vis-à-vis the sacerdotal caste, since it is from the latter that it receives not only the teaching of traditional doctrine but also the legitimation of its own power, in which strictly consists the "divine right." Next, when this same warrior caste, overturning the normal relations of subordination, lays claim to supremacy, its predominance is generally accompanied by that of feminine elements in the symbolism of the traditional form modified by it, and sometimes even also, as a consequence of this modification, by the institution of a feminine form of priesthood, such as that of the Druidesses among the Celts. We merely indicate here this last point, the development of which would take us too far, especially if we wished to seek elsewhere for concordant examples; but at least this indication suffices to make understood why it is the she-bear, rather than the bear, that is symbolically opposed to the boar.

It should be added that the two symbols of the boar and the bear do not always necessarily appear as being in opposition or in struggle, but that, in certain cases, they can also represent spiritual authority and temporal power, or the two castes of Druids and Knights, in their normal and harmonious relations, as one sees notably in the legend of Merlin and Arthur. In fact, Merlin, the Druid, is still the boar of the forest of Brocéliande (where he is moreover finally not killed like the Calydonian boar, but only put to sleep by a feminine power); and King Arthur bears a name derived from that of the bear, arth[18]; more precisely, this name is

among different peoples.

18 One also finds in Scotland, as a family name, Mac-Arth, or "son of the bear," which obviously indicates membership in a warrior clan.

identical to that of the star Arcturus, taking into account the slight difference due to their respectively Celtic and Greek derivations. This star is found in the constellation of the Herdsman (Boötes), and, by these names, one may still see brought together the marks of two different periods: the "garden of the Bear" became the Herdsman when the Bear itself, or the sapta-riksha, became the septem triones, that is to say, the "seven oxen" (whence the appellation "Septentrion" to designate the North); but we do not have to concern ourselves here with these transformations, relatively recent with respect to what we are considering[19].

From the considerations we have just set forth, a conclusion seems to emerge regarding the respective role of the two currents that contributed to forming the Celtic tradition: originally, spiritual authority and temporal power were not separated as two differentiated functions, but united in their common principle, and one finds a vestige of this union in the very name of the Druids (dru-vid, "force-wisdom," these two terms being symbolized by the oak and the mistletoe)[20]; in this capacity, and also as representing more particularly spiritual authority, to which the upper part of the doctrine is reserved, they were the true heirs of the primordial tradition, and the essentially "Borean" symbol, that of the boar, belonged to them in their own right. As for the Knights, having the bear (or the she-bear of Atalanta) as their symbol, one may think that the part of the tradition that was more especially destined for them comprised above all the elements proceeding from the Atlantean tradition, and this distinction might even perhaps help to explain certain more or less enigmatic points in the later history of Western traditions.

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19 Arthur is the son of Uther Pendragon, the "chief of the five," the supreme ruler who resides in the fifth kingdom, that of Afal or Avallon, situated at the center of the four other subordinate kingdoms located at the four cardinal points (see Le Roi du Monde, pp. 110–113); and this role is comparable to that of the celestial Dragon when, containing the polar influence, it was "in the middle of the sky like a king upon his throne," according to the expression of the Sepher Yetsirah (cf. our already cited article La Terre du Soleil).

20 See Autorité spirituelle et pouvoir temporel, pp. 59–60, where we indicated the equivalence of this symbolism with that of the Sphinx.

# THREE CELTIC STUDIES

# I

## GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE CELTIC TRADITION[1]

First of all, it is well to specify what is meant here by the word "Celt," the more or less vague use of which has been the point of departure for numerous confusions. Does this word designate a people? a race? Neither the one nor the other. In our view, the word "Celt" designates a tradition. The peoples who adopted it thereby became Celtic, and they ceased to be so from the day when they abandoned this tradition. The Celtic tradition is the tradition proper to our race, this term being taken in a very general sense. This race, the so-called present "white" race, comprises four different types:

1° dolichocephalic leptoprosopes[2], with elongated skull and face;
2° dolichocephalic chamaeprosopes[3], with elongated skull and short, broad face;
3° brachycephalic leptoprosopes, with short skull, truncated and rounded at the back, and narrow face;
4° brachycephalic chamaeprosopes, with short, truncated skull and short, broad face.

These four types have all indubitably existed since the beginning of the race. They have (the proof of this being found in caves and in burials) always lived alongside one another and intermixed; present European

1 See our previous studies published in Le Voile d'Isis: La Théocratie (March 1930), La Tradition en Europe (June 1930), Essai sur la Pierre (March 1934); as well as the following articles: R. Guénon, Les Pierres Foudroyées (May 1929), La Triple Enceinte (June 1929). — Argos: Nos ancêtres celtes, leurs druides et leurs bardes (November 1930). — P. Genty: Thor et Parashu-Râma (December 1928).

2 From leptos, narrow.

3 From Kamos, low, little elevated.

civilization and culture are the common product of these types.

The origin of this civilization is the Celtic tradition. Whence does the latter come? A set of concordant indications makes it possible to reply: from the "Great Land of the West," from the continent situated in the Atlantic Ocean, from primordial "Iberia." This is the Mag Mor of Celtic legends, the "Great Plain," legendary land of the Gods and of the Dead since it collapsed beneath the waves. Two paths led to this marvelous land: one was to follow subterranean routes, whose entrances were formed by certain caves; the other was to embark upon the sea, on the ships of the Gods or on the marine horse that conducts the dead, at certain points of the coasts[4]. One thus arrived in the supernatural region of happiness and beauty.

From there came those who transmitted the sacred Tradition to Europe: the Iberians; for—it must not be forgotten—it is only after the Christian era that Iberia (a word meaning "western") was identified with the present Iberian peninsula.

The Celtic tradition is therefore of origin from the Land of Death, and the God of Death is the ancestor of the Celts. In Caesar's time, the Gauls still claimed descent from this god whom the Roman conqueror calls Dispater and identifies with Pluto. This god was represented by a man armed with a hammer and leaning upon a tree. He has four names in Irish: Baldr (from bal, to die); Tighermans, "Lord of Death"; Ernmas, "He who gives death"; and finally Miled, the "Evil Eye," so named because the gaze of his single eye killed, reducing to ashes all that it struck.

This gaze was that of the single eye by which, during storms, the sun hidden by clouds launches the lightning and kills; the clouds traversed by lightning are the lifted eyelid of the divine, deadly eye.

The Iberians encountered several races upon arriving in Europe—an Europe moreover very different from present-day Europe: doubtless the

4 These points are called in Brittany *Penn marc'h* "horse's head" or *Goulvarc'h* "horse's cove"

Sahara was then an inland sea and the Mediterranean did not yet exist; the plains of Russia were probably submerged; the Channel was not formed, and the British Isles were united both to one another and to continental Armorica. In a very general way, one may say that the Iberians found in southern and central Europe a population dark like themselves, of small stature, but brachycephalic (and not dolichocephalic like the Iberians): these were the Ligurians, whose certain characteristics brought them close to negroes. Toward the east lived a brachycephalic race, tall, blond, mongoloid; and to the north a race also tall and blond, but dolichocephalic.

It seems, according to very ancient legends, that this last race had already dominated the Earth at a very remote epoch; primitive man would have been white and would have come from the North. Beyond the Northern Ocean, say the Celts, is a land that touches the walls of Heaven. It is there that man was created; he was born of the Tree.

In a distant, mysterious place, at the center of the world, exists a tree that was planted at the origin of ages. Created in the abysses of the Ocean, it emerged from the waters after the primordial deluge[5]. It unites Earth and Heaven and engenders all living beings; it is the first cause of all manifested things. “All was born in the sea,” Empedocles would later say, echoing this tradition. First, isolated parts of animals were seen floating there—heads, limbs, trunks; then these parts joined together by chance, forming mythological animals: centaurs, sphinxes, chimeras, etc. Some of these hybrid beings still exist today, such as the hippocampus, with horse’s head and fish’s body, and the octopus, with man’s head and serpent’s body. Soon the parts destined to be joined came together and gave rise to present beings: shells and crustaceans attached to the branches of the Tree became birds…

Man, the final fruit of the primordial tree, is born in the water, covered with a spiny shell from which emerges a fish-foetus. He becomes the Nautilus or the Argonaut (to whom a sometimes “messianic” character was attributed), then the Octopus: head of man and arms radiating

5 According to some legends, the Tree is currently buried once again, in the depths of the Ocean.

around the head like the rays of the sun; these arms are serpents. Then the Octopus became man. The first men engendered from the sea had four wings and two faces, a single body ending in a serpent's tail, first sexless, then possessing both sexes with two heads—one male and one female—and finally two separate beings[6].

The Assyrians and the Greeks regarded the Octopus, man and serpent, as the precursor if not the ancestor of man. The Nautilus is engendered from the blood of heaven at the same time as Venus. In Mycenaean civilization, the cult of the sacred octopus is identified with that of Venus, that is to say with the cult of the sea. Moreover, Theophrastus notes in his description of the Marine Oak the presence of the octopus around its branches. In several ancient representations—drawings, sculptures, objects—what has often been taken for a ram's head is in reality an octopus with two arms. The sacred octopus eventually came to be represented by four arms issuing from a center and coiled at their extremity; then these arms ended by becoming straight lines terminated by hooks. This schema is found on the most ancient statues of Venus[7].

The Octopus, sketch or simulacrum of man, corresponds to the bottom of the Waters; in the zodiac, to the middle of the sign of Cancer. The descending half of the zodiac represents the night, the period of non-manifestation, or rather of manifestation in a prior cycle. The present cycle begins opposite, at the 15th degree of Capricorn; the symbolic animals for this cycle are:

the Boar, from 15° Capricorn to 15° Aquarius
the Bear, from 15° Aquarius to 15° Pisces
the Ram, from 15° Pisces to 15° Aries
the Bull, from 15° Aries to 15° Taurus
the Horse, from 15° Taurus to 15° Gemini
the Sow, from 15° Gemini to 15° Cancer

6 See L'Ancêtre de l'Homme d'après les anciens, par J.Constantin, dans la Revue scientifique des 6 et 13 janvier 1906, et, du même auteur, La Nature tropicale, chap. XXI: Le dernier cataclysme terrestre et la religion primitive de l'humanité.

7 The head of Medusa, the Lernaean Hydra, are aspects of the octopus. There are several drawings of octopuses on stone: in the south (Mediterranean basin), the arms are extended along the body; in the north (Scandinavia) they are coiled in a spiral. Both representations are found on Armorican dolmens.

thus rejoining the primitive Octopus (from 15° Cancer to 15° Leo).

In the first period, humanity is organized in Theocracy. There exist only families and groups of families of the same stock: “Traditions and the results of contemporary archaeological studies allow us to glimpse, in the distant ages, when the white race was at its dawn, an epoch when this race was governed by Sages, learned and inspired, mediators or instruments of the Divine Will.

“There were then only men; there were no peoples. One did not know what gods were, since gods are nothing other than the various ways of understanding and naming God: their birth dates from the division of the race into diverse peoples; division on one plane engenders division on the other planes.

“After having received the teachings of the races that preceded it, the white race contributed to the decadence and destruction of these races, not without having to sustain terrible struggles against them, of which the traditions of all countries have preserved the memory.

“At this age of humanity, reason is not sufficiently developed to exaggerate its power and arrogantly silence intuition, which, in accord with instinct, commands submission to the Sages—those men who never fail humanity when it needs them, when it calls them, or even when it merely desires them.

“Reason is then latent in man, and consequently the idea of freedom is so as well. For what we pompously call human freedom is believed in all the more as our reason grows: if, no longer allowing himself to be deceived by reason, he allows the superior principles of his being to evolve, man no longer recognizes himself as free to choose between order and disorder, love and hatred; he can no longer fail to harmonize his life with universal Life.

“The Sage of the primitive theocratic era governs because he is Sage,

and because man of that time is obliged to obey the Sage. The child-race is more conscious than it will later be of the divine in nature and in man. It accepts, even seeks, the authority of the Sage, in whom it recognizes a man of more evolved consciousness than its own, who will be the intermediary between the Divine and itself, and constitutes him its protector and its guide. But the child becomes man, the race becomes adult. It senses within itself forces that imperiously demand their liberation. The Sages are less respected, less obeyed; their authority weakening, many among them seek to replace this Authority with Power. This is the sad dawn of politics.

“When Power ignores Authority, force prevails over right. The race divides into peoples. It is at this epoch that the division of territory in Europe took place; agriculture replaced the pastoral state. It is the birth of local gods and of social egoism; the members separate from the body and wish to live their own life

Thus, as d’Eckstein recognized, the period of castes succeeded primitive theocracy. The first caste to be formed was the religious caste; it was composed of the former Sages and their disciples, whose authority was now only nominal, and who united in order better to defend the remnants of their authority. The second was the caste of warriors, from which were recruited the chiefs and kings who usurped power and pushed aside Authority. The last was the plebs, from which the caste of traders later detached itself. The period of castes is a period of anarchy; it is a state of continual war, a latent war between the religious caste and the warrior caste.

“According to Baron d’Eckstein, it is upon the ruins of the castes that the renewed theocracy arises, the Theocracy based upon the sacerdotal hierarchy, and this is indeed the result of a revolution, for this theocracy is incompatible with the regime of castes. This second theocracy, in Celtica, was Druidism. Nothing proves in an absolute manner that such was the succession of events in Celtica; nevertheless, the thing is very probable. Celtica was even, in our opinion, the native land of the race that has left throughout the entire world the traces of this primitive

theocratic state."[8]

In the first period, the Boar, an animal that lives in solitude and not in a herd, is taken as a symbol of Wisdom, on account of the elongation of its snout, as in other countries the elephant and the tapir. "Hasten, hasten near the Apple Tree, the old white boar will teach you," such was the call of the Druids to their pupils.

According to the Celts, the boar, like the pig, has very dull hearing, but extraordinarily subtle sight. Alone, it "sees" the wind that all other creatures perceive only by touch. The boar is the brother of man; he was once man. It is a sacred animal.[9]

During the theocratic period, the two sacerdotal and royal functions are united in the same individuals: fathers of families, chiefs of clans, etc. The following period, symbolized by the Bear[10], sees the separation of the two functions and the revolt of royal power against sacerdotal authority. The latter finally triumphs (see the legend of Parashu-Râma), but power always sought to take its revenge and to enslave the representatives of Authority [for example, the destruction of the Boar of Calydon[11]]. At the beginning of the Christian era, in Ireland for example, Druids had become magicians completely subjected to the king.

One of the characteristics of the tyranny of the royal caste—especially when women dominate directly or indirectly—is, according to some, the institution of human sacrifices, under whatever form they may take.[12]

The reputation of the Gauls in this respect was well established in Greco-Latin antiquity. The Druids (as later the Toltecs in Central America) made every effort to restrict and regulate this custom;

8 D' Maurice Adam: Etudes celtiques.

9 While the Scandinavians revered the wild boar, the Sami held it in deep aversion, seeing it as the mount of sorcerers on their satanic journeys. For the Berbers, the wild boar is a Christian, a Nazarene. The Semites abhor pork; the Scottish mountain peasants share this aversion.

10 Période tyrannie de la femme. See Fabre d'Olivet et Saint-Yves d'Alveydre.

11 Same root as Celtic and Caledonia.

12 In the Aztec empire, a few years before the arrival of Christopher Columbus, during a religious ceremony, eighty thousand prisoners were sacrificed in a few days.

sacrifices properly so called were then limited to scarifications of devotees, and there remained only the immolations of condemned criminals and prisoners of war; capital sentences were carried out near the altars under the supervision of the Druids, executions commanded, even sanctified by religion, but which were no longer sacrifices properly so called.

For the periods of the Ram and of the Bull, we can do no better than refer to what Saint-Yves d'Alveydre said of them in his Mission des Juifs. Certain legends speak of a vast Celtiberian or Celto-Ligurian empire that seems to have lasted several millennia in Western Europe and in Northern Africa. The properly Celtic countries perhaps remained outside of and above this empire, organized as a theocracy.

A cataclysm occurring about 7,000 years before our era (this is not the collapse of the Atlantic continent which occurred about 4,000 years earlier) brought the period of the Bear to an end. At the end of that of the Bull took place the Deluge of Ogygia. In the following period, that of the Horses (terrestrial horse conductor of the living, marine horse conductor of the dead), the initiatic centers that guarded the tradition were reorganized; monuments were built according to sacred proportions, the tradition was committed to writing. Then began the mysteries of the Cabires (to which Chivalry is connected in the following period). The Celts always manifested a great repugnance toward committing the tradition to writing; its transmission was always assured orally as in ancient times:

"They did not write the name of God upon a ring; they kept, in order to transmit the doctrine, the initiatic mode, and, in order to engrave it in minds, rhythm, a mnemonic means and hieroglyphic language which, by number, makes it possible to mold upon thought the form most closely approximated to such or such a vulgar idiom."[13]

Moreover, this tradition is preserved among the Hebrews, whose sacred

13 Marc Hav en: La Tradition chez les Druides.

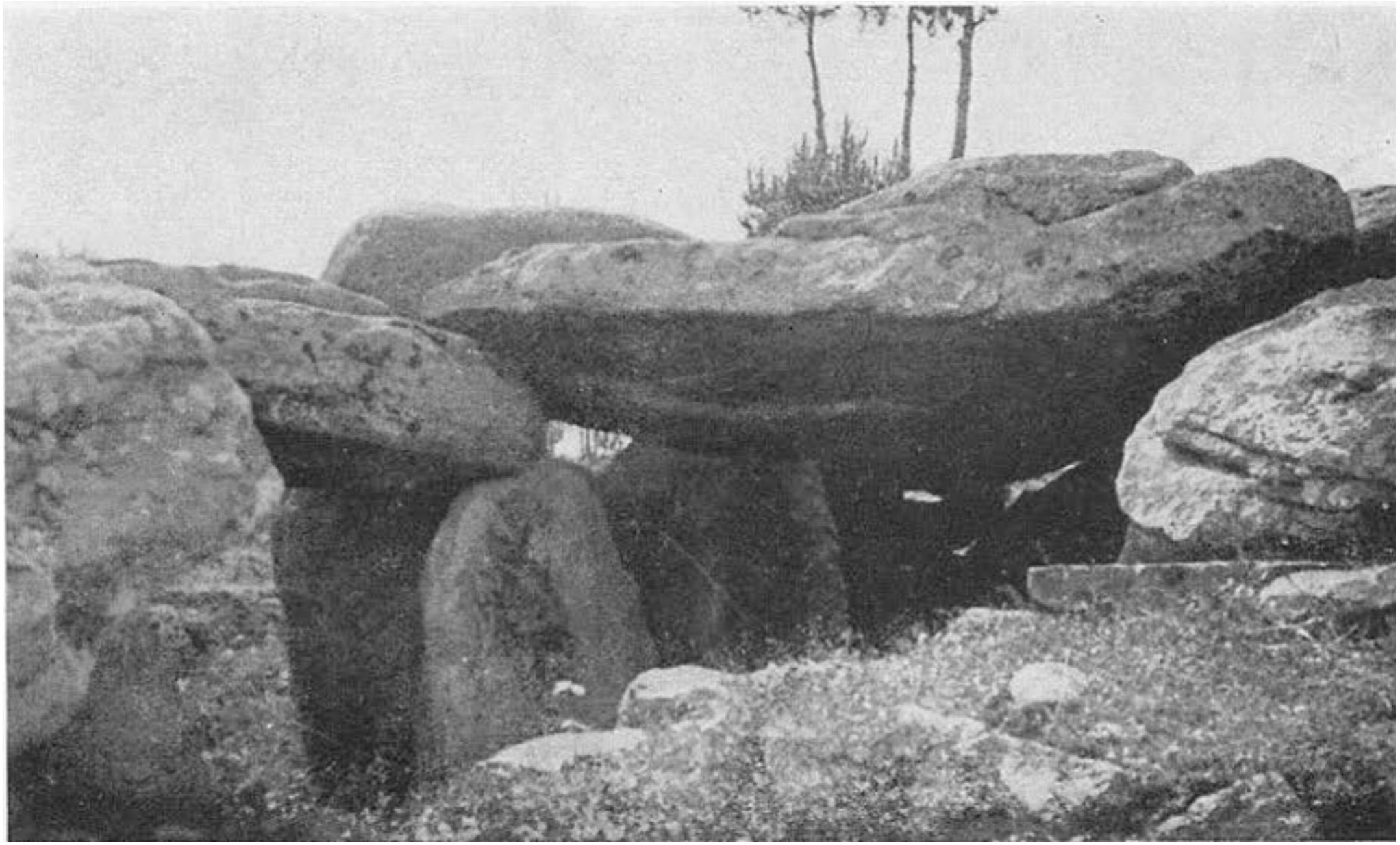

PLATE II.

Dolmen of Mané Groee'h

books set forth a doctrine which, without doubt, is essentially the same as that of the Celts. One may say the same of Orphism and of Pythagoreanism.

As for monuments, the Celts never wished to cut stone; the cut megaliths (Stonehenge, Locmariaquer) therefore belong to a less pure tradition, but the rough megalithic monuments were indeed erected by peoples of Celtic tradition, whether Ligurian or others, and under the direction of the Druids, both in Europe and in Northern Africa or in Western Asia.[14] These ensembles, like the Pyramids among other peoples, were erected according to sacred proportions and in relation to the Sun and to the calendar.[15] The monuments of Armorica and of southern Great Britain reproduce the serpent and the cosmic egg.[16]

The alignments of Morbihan are oriented in very definite directions, according to the rising of the sun at various epochs of the year: beginnings of November, February, May, and August, average dates of the principal periods of the agricultural year. But if one places oneself at a given point of the cromlech, one sees the sun rise beneath certain menhirs placed crosswise across the avenues of alignments; the dates are then those of the solstices and the equinoxes.[17]

As for the question so often posed—did the megalithic monuments have a cultic or funerary purpose?—we reply that it is the same thing, for there was no other cult than the cult of the ancestors and, above all, of the Ancestor of ancestors, the Father of the Race.[18]

14 1. "Everything suggests that the dolmens of Northern Germany, formed from glacial blocks, are the oldest we know of. These monuments attest to a Hyperborean current. The dolmens of Asia, like those of North Africa, belong to a much more recent period. In countries civilized early on, such as Greece and Italy, one does not find dolmens properly speaking, but constructions of large blocks, called 'cyclopean,' which already testify to a very great progress in the art of building. We must therefore see in Eastern Europe and Asia not the starting point, but the culmination of megalithic architecture. There is a primitive European unity, which is that of the Neolithic and Copper Age, a primitive Neolithic civilization having radiated even the length of Central Europe or Northern Europe" (S. Reinach: The Oriental Mirage, in Anthropology, Sept. to 1893).

15 See Norman Lockyer. The dawn ofAstronomy; Stonehenge and other british stones monuments.

16 See Stuckley, Bathurst,Deane, Borlase.etc.

17 Gaillard, *L'astronomie préhistorique*, and the works of A.Devoir.

18 On megalithic monuments in general, see the very complete work by Ferguson: *Les monuments mégalithiques de tous pays*, French translation by the abbot Harnard.

The dolmens are tombs that were covered with tumuli of earth or stones; several burials could moreover have taken place successively, and at fairly distant epochs, in certain dolmens. Some of these tumuli were surmounted by a menhir or by a small dolmen.

Near the dead person, one placed his familiar objects, in order to recall as much as possible his earthly dwelling. There were also sacred objects, vessels and above all stone axes or celtae: "Symbol of the divine principle like the menhir and the miniature menhir, the axe took one of the names of this principle, Thus or Thor. The axe was the symbol of Thor… later the symbolic axe was transformed into a hammer, and it is doubtless the hammer that is the prototype of this universal symbol, the Tau… Axe and menhir are one and the same symbol, the symbol of God present in nature, eternally creating and producing beings. The menhir and the axe, like the Christian cross, protected the sepulcher."[19]

Certain vessels are empty, others contained offerings; several were intentionally broken before the closing of the tomb. Most often, the skeleton is placed in the crouched position, the position of the fetus; fairly frequently, one notes trepanation and artificial dental wear, which were without doubt sacred usages.[20]

In the last period, all the elements that could not be assimilated in the preceding periods, all the residues, are "taken up" and "digested," assimilated by the lowest parts of society. This period has as its hieroglyph the Sow. But it is at the same time a resumption, a summary of the preceding cycles. This was the role of the Celtic Church (and, in the East, of the Chaldean Church).

One must now say a few words about the "Sacred Land" where the

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19 Dr Maurice Adam: *Etudes celtiques*.

20 For Grasset d'Orcet—generally more successful in his hypotheses—dolmens were chambers intended to be heated for steam baths or fumigations, etc., to cure certain nervous disorders (epilepsy, etc.). The skull was trepanned to allow the spirit of the illness to leave. This opinion, to say the least original, should be added to all those reported in the abbot Millon's work: Poor Stones!

deposit of the tradition was preserved. The most ancient legends situate it in a country where the day was equal to the year, so that there were six months of night and six months of day, which indicates a polar situation and relates to the beginnings of humanity upon the Earth. This country is the “island of the Seres” (the Seres and the Cares are sometimes identified), the “Seria beyond Ortygia” of which Homer speaks.

Old legends teach us that at that epoch life was possible at these high latitudes, the climate not being the same as in our days and the polar sea being free of ice. Herodotus speaks of peoples who sleep six months; they sow in the morning, reap at noon, gather fruit in the evening, and enclose it at night in their caverns.

During the existence of the Atlantic continent, the polar axis would have been directed toward the Pleiades. The peak of Tenerife would be the last vestige of the “Sacred Land” of that epoch.

At what moment and as a result of what upheavals did the “Sacred Land” change its geographical position? It is very difficult to answer these questions, but whatever the case may be, this “Sacred Land” later had, at the summer solstice, the day without night, and at the winter solstice the night without day; numerous traditions indicate this. It is then the island of Ogygia, of Elixoia, the second Thule. It is generally identified with Iceland, which at that epoch would have been larger than today. This is not impossible.

This sacred island is called the “Island of the Four Masters,” who are symbolized by the four branches of the swastika, the Celtic Hewoud. These are the guardians of the four points of space; at the center is the Axis, the Pole, the Quintessence. This spiritual center is the “iridescent island,” the “crystal island,” Glasstown, the “city of glass” (identified much later with Glastonbury), which is identical with the “mountain of white jade” of the Far Easterners, white jade which, according to the Li-Ki, is the subtle matter of the rainbow concretized and fixed in the

form of stone.[21] The rainbow, let us recall, is the "bridge" cast between Heaven and Earth.

Ogygia, Ogh iagh, sacred island, is also called Tir na n-og, the "Land of Youth"; Tir na m-Beo, the "Land of the Living"; Mag Mell, "Land of delights." It is the island Basilié, the royal island where amber was gathered and where Phaethon was hurled down; it is Asgaard, the Odainsakr of the Scandinavians, the "field of immortality."

On this island were preserved tablets of bronze upon which were engraved in golden characters the works of the ancient Patriarchs.[22] There reigned a perpetual spring; the surrounding air was of extraordinary mildness and perfumed by ambrosia. The fertility of the soil caused the tree with golden apples (the orange tree) to flower and bear fruit three times each year—the golden apples of the garden of the Hesperides.[23] These apples were guarded—like the red apples of the sacred orchard of Avalon—by a winged Dragon, symbol of Wisdom and Intelligence,[24] Dragon who is the sovereign of this sacred world. His envoys were also called "winged serpents," "feathered serpents." This title is found again in the traditions of pre-Columbian America: Kukulkan among the Mayas, Gugumatz among the Quichés, Quetzalcoatl in Mexico: these are all Toltecs, envoys of Tula.

This Mexican Tula is indeed identical with the Thule of the Greeks; the meaning is the same. According to Isidore of Seville, the sacred island, the ultima Thule, is situated beyond Britain, between the band of the North and that of the West, that is to say to the northwest of Britain. Its name comes from "Sun"[25] and signifies "Island of the Sun."

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21 This iridescent white jade is the emerald of the ancients. The rarest species is purple jade, dark as a rooster's comb; it was used to make sacred vases.

22 *Uranus, Saturn, and Jupite*r. According to the Celts, Ouranos, the Sky, their first king, had reigned over the West and the North.

23 In the Middle Ages, it became the Isle of Avalon (same root as avalon in Breton: apple in English), of enchanted apples. There reigns a queen aided by her nine sisters; it is there that Merlin went to retreat with nine disciples, there that Arthur is hidden until his return.

24 See in this regard our article on The Carbuncle in the special issue of Le Voile d'Isis devoted to Gems, April 1929, especially pp. 298 and 299.

25 According to some, it is a contraction of Theos and Helios.

According to the Aztecs, Tlapallan, the "City of the Sun," is situated in the northeast; it is also Tlalocan, "country of the Tlalocs." Tolteca comes from Tollan or Tula, contracted form of Tonatzan, "place of the sun."[26]

Thule or Tula, country of the Sun, is Ogygia, the sacred island; it was also called Kronie, and the surrounding ocean the Kronian Ocean.[27] The Greeks brought this word close to Chronos, Time, whom they identified with Saturn. But this name Kronie must be brought close to Apollo Karneios.[28] The high places, the rocks, were consecrated to him. It is he who is the unique God whom the Celts adored under diverse aspects; he is the Ancestor of ancestors whose symbol is the Sun, whose representation here below is the eternally green Tree, the yew among the Celts.

At a certain epoch, Apollo Karneios was supplanted by Saturn Kronos,[29] who is perhaps the same as the Baal of the Phoenicians, for this Saturn demanded human sacrifices; he is Tethra, the cruel and sanguinary god of the Celts. The Greeks moreover said that Saturn, god adored at Thule, was finally reduced to captivity by Jupiter, who had him guarded by the giant Briareus; he slumbered in a grotto, but awakened from time to time, and when he awoke, his breathing was agitated and he had titanic convulsions.[30]
The Guardians of orthodox Tradition had to go into exile once more. At an epoch that seems to correspond to that of the Deluge of Ogygia, they went to a country where the longest day (16 hours) is double the shortest day (8 hours), that is to say toward latitude 50°. This station corresponds

26 For these comparisons, consult the studies of Eugène Beauvois:
The Transatlantic Elysium and the Western Eden, Paris, 1884.- The Elysium of the Mexicans compared to that of the Celts, Paris, 1885.- The Paradise of the Atlantic.

27 The oldest Celtic traditions about the Elysian Cronian are found
in Plutarch.

28 The root KRN designates everything that is high, prominent, that which
pomines, that which is in front. This root is found, among other words, in Cornouaille, Carnute, in Carnac (a place consecrated to Apollo Rameios, Christianized as Saint Cornelius, then as Pope Cornelius). The patronage of the solar archangel, Saint Michael, therefore changed nothing. The etymology we indicate is indeed the origin of the name Carnac, and not the very fanciful one accepted by Joseph Loth: Carnaceum, "charnel house of God."

29 The Sun has two aspects: white sun and black sun, which are found in all traditions.

30 Volcanic eruptions of Hekla.

to the temple of Stonehenge,[31] whose stones, according to a Celtic legend, were brought from the "sacred island, island of the Four Masters." This temple was erected around 1700 before our era—shortly after the deluge of Deucalion—on the site of a more ancient monument.[32]

It is toward the same epoch that the giant megaliths of Locmariaquer were erected. The alignments of Carnac seem slightly earlier, but all these ensembles of rough stones of the Armorican Bro-Waroch and of English Cornwall, dolmenic chambers decorated in the Gulf of Morbihan and in Ireland, are approximately of the same epoch and belong to different forms of the same tradition: that of the Celts preserved by the Druids. The inhabitants of Armorica were indeed the brothers of the inhabitants of the land beyond the Channel, with whom they always had close relations, and they were, on the contrary, very different from their neighbors of the Gauls, just as insular Celts are from their Anglo-Saxon neighbors.

Anglo-Saxons and Gallo-Franks never had more than a royal initiation, which later deviated; sacerdotal initiation was preserved by the peoples today called "Celtic."

At the same time as the center guarding the tradition was reorganized in Western Europe, another was constituted in the East, at the confines of Europe and Asia, in Chaldea.[33] This is the "Mountain of the Prophets" of the tradition of Abraham, who originated there. Monuments of rough stone also exist on that side, but if nothing remains of what the Druids taught orally, the tradition of Abraham, which is essentially the same, was committed to writing; the Celtic Druids are very close to the Hebrew Prophets; the meaning of the two names is the same.

The coming of the Messiah was awaited by both; one of the Magi Kings

31 See Norman Lockyer, Stonehenge and other british stone monuments and Herbert Stone. The stones of Stonehenge.

32 Twenty-five years ago, "sun worshippers" still came from Asia to the temple of Stonehenge every year at the summer solstice. See the journal La Nature, no. 2091, and the Revue Scientifique, 1923, nos. 18 and 22, 1924, no. 4.

33 Note that this word has the same root as Celtic.

PLATE III.

Dolmen of Mané Groee'h

was “king of Hibernia and of Erin.” Two churches are directly attached to the mother Church of Jerusalem: in the East, the Chaldean Church which evangelized Asia; in the West, the Celtic Church which evangelized America. All true Druids converted without difficulty to Christianity; the false Druids disappeared; it is in Ireland that they remained the longest, but Saint Patrick destroyed their power. Christianity was established among the Celts as among the Chaldeans, almost without bloodshed. At that moment, the center of Celtic Christianity seems to be in the mountains of northwest Scotland, where, according to legend, the Holy Grail was brought.

The influence of the Celtic Church upon Frankish civilization deserves a special study which we shall doubtless undertake some day, but which cannot find its place here.

# II

# THE CELTIC GOD AND OGHAMIC WRITING

The Celts worshipped a single God whose symbol was the Sun. It is he whom the Greeks called the god of the Hyperboreans, Apollo Karneios.

The Sun moreover has a double influence, beneficial and maleficent[1]. Alongside Apollo Karneios, there is therefore Saturn–Kronos, and we have seen above that the latter ends by supplanting the former.

This god has as his emblem the visible Sun, but he himself is the invisible Sun—at least invisible to our world—for it is he who illuminates the world of the Dead, of the Ancestors, and who manifests himself in our world as Grannus and Belenus; Grannus, from the Gaelic Grian, Sun, and Belenus, from Bel, which was originally the name of the Moon (Bel, Belene, Selene, Helene).

It is this Sun of the world of the Ancestors who is the Father of the Race, the Ancestor of ancestors from whom the Celts, and after them the Gauls, claimed all to descend[2]; he had a single eye in the middle of his forehead, and this eye reduced to ashes whoever saw it. It is he who was worshipped at Ogygia. According to Hecataeus, Diodorus, and Plutarch, the inhabitants of this island all regarded themselves as priests of Apollo. This god visited them every 19 years[3]; they rendered him continual worship and sang every day in his honor hymns and canticles while accompanying themselves with musical instruments.

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1 In the tradition of Israel, this double aspect is represented by Michael and Samael, who are respectively the luminous face and the obscure face of Metatron. In the Sephirothic Tree, the sephirah Tiphereth reunites these two influences once again.

2 Caesar's Dis-pater, from the Gaelic divith, becoming diith, then dith, death.

3 There was also a 30-year cycle on this island related to Saturn. The Celtic "century" was 60 years; they also used a 600-year period.

They had dedicated to him a vast sacred enclosure, containing a large circular temple adorned with a great number of rich offerings. The city of which this temple formed part was entirely consecrated to this god, and its inhabitants were, for the most part, players of instruments who constantly made it resound with songs in which they celebrated, accompanying themselves, the deeds and praises of Apollo. He himself, at the times of his periodic appearances, was heard every night singing while accompanying himself on the lyre, presiding over dances that lasted without interruption throughout the entire time of his stay. The guarding of his temple and the government of the city belonged to hereditary kings called Boreads, descendants of Boreas.

The high places were specially consecrated to Apollo Karneios; the Celtic cairn is the sacred mount, the solar mount. This is, let us repeat, the origin of Armorican Carnac, and the dedication of the mound to Saint Michael and that of the city to Pope Cornelius have changed nothing. It is always a "solar city," particularly consecrated to the culminating sun, at noon, at the summer solstice.

The single god had three names designating three qualities, three different aspects of the same god, which later became three different gods: in Ireland, Bress, Balar, Tethra[4]; among the Gauls their names have been preserved for us by Lucan: they are Esus, Teutates, and Taranis[5]. Taranis comes from Taran, thunder; Teutates is Teut Tad, the father of the people, of the race; as for Esus[6] (which has been compared, quite wrongly, to the Armorican Euzus, "terrible"), which is perhaps the As of the Scandinavians, this word may come from the root Idh, to burn, to kindle. As would mean Being; Asu, the living Spirit.

The supreme god under his triple aspect was "triple power" (KRN); in phonetic hieroglyphism, he was represented by three horns, three heads (trikarenos), three cranes (trigaranus), sometimes by a boar with three

4 I t has been compared with the Vedic gods: Varuna, Yama, and Tvashtri.

5 Esus and Tyr were brought together; Teutates and Odin, Taranis and Thor, identifying them respectively with Mars, Mercury and Jupiter.

6 Some have identified Hu, the Cymric chief, with Esus, and his epithet Gadarn, strong, powerful, with Carn. The sun is called Huan in Welsh and Hu in Zend. Hu, the sun, the guide of migrations, is at once priest and king.

horns, the boar being par excellence the emblem of the Celtic race. Later, he was represented by a man carrying a mallet or an axe and leaning on a tree; sometimes the man is a bearded old man, and the tree must be a yew, eternally green—then it is the Ancestor of ancestors; sometimes the man is a beardless adolescent, and the tree must then be an oak; in this case it is the Son who is represented, who is then no longer the Sun, but Mercury[7].

Mercury was, Caesar tells us, the great divinity of the Gauls; he speaks of several "simulacra" of this god. Salomon Reinach[8] has shown that by "simulacra" Caesar means standing stones, one of the most ancient symbols of Hermes[9].

This Mercury also has a double aspect, beneficial and maleficent: civilizer, healer, and destructive warrior, symbolized respectively by the ram-headed serpent bearing three horns and the goat-headed serpent bearing two horns. He is Borvo—in Gaul Grannos—the god of thermal springs; Lugaid or Lug, master of the arts, "prince with multiple arts," capable of exercising all trades, warrior, but victor over the god of death. He is the god of artisans, merchants, bourgeois—in a word, of the middle class[10].

The Celtic Mercury is also Woden, Wodan, Odin, the civilizer who carries tradition among peoples[11]. Among the Gaels, he is Ogme[12], god of speech, inventor of letters and of sacred writing, oghamic.

This writing was originally composed of ten consonants represented by groups of dots and strokes, respectively from one to five. There were

7 "The mother is the Earth, the fertile matrix from which everything that lives emerges and into which everything returns to merge. It is she who, after having engendered all beings, welcomes and protects their final sleep. Mother of life, she is also the protectress of the dead." (A. Grenier: Les Gaulois).

8 Revue Celtique, April 1890 and April 1892.

9 Cf. Paniagua, La divinité néolithique, Paris, 1914.

10 Among all the Gaels, August 1 bore the name "feast of Lug." A tradition made Lug the inventor of the ancient fixed-date assemblies. He gave his name to the Lug-dunum of Gaul, whose name means "fortress of Lug." The principal ones were Lyon, Laon, Leyden, and Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges. Lug is the Celtic Hermes; Balor is the Celtic Argos.

11 In pre-Columbian America, it is Wotan, the chief of the Toltecs, that is to say of the sacerdotes, the Aztecs being the warriors. Several points of Celtic tradition can be found among the Toltecs.

12 Ogmio, Ogma, Ogmi.

oghamic systems of 16 and of 25 letters, but one settled on an alphabet of 20 letters[13]. The names of these letters are all names of trees, for among the Celts trees symbolized sacred science[14]. "In the Gaulish dialect," says Jean Reynaud, "the celebrated word gwydd signifies at once tree and science or literature, and in the Irish dialect geadha likewise presents this double meaning."

According to Grasset d'Orcet, this alphabet would have been preserved in the Middle Ages and would have served as a secret language, for example by short and long bell peals; it would be related to several other alphabets. We think it interesting to reproduce here a few passages from this archaeologist, sometimes too imaginative, but who knew many things and who, in any case, can suggest new perspectives:

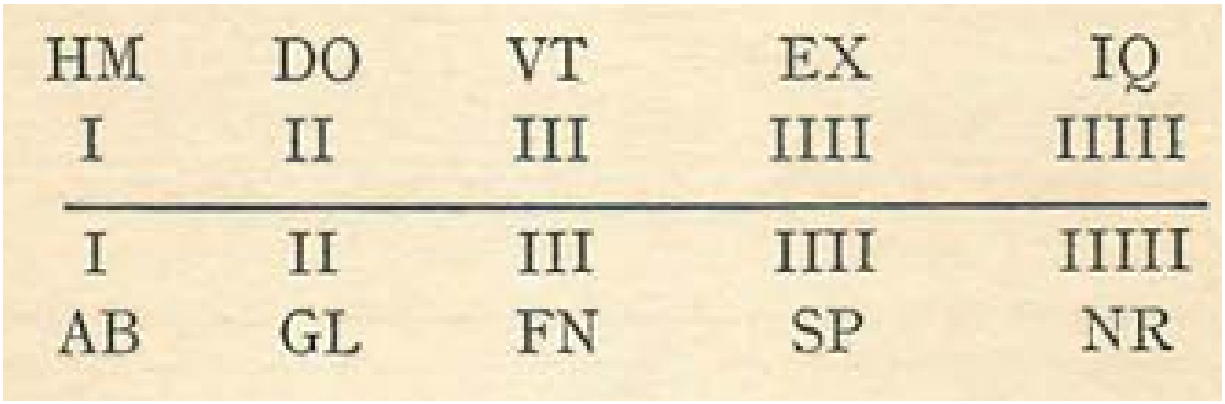
"The peulvans of the monument of Kergaval bear the oldest known specimens of writing composed of straight bars and parallel bent bars, which group from the number one up to the number five. These ideograms, which one has wished to take for axe-heads, are read much more easily than other more modern ones, the Cypriot for example, thanks to their well-determined arithmetic character. They form legends in which one recognizes radicals belonging to the different Celtic idioms. This comb-shaped alphabet is found in the layer that preceded the occupation of Ilion by the Trojans; the latter, by substituting another less rudimentary one for it, did not make it disappear. It continued in the ceramics of Rhodes, Cyprus, Corinth, and Italy, and it probably served to form cuneiform, which also never abandoned its alphabetic character…

"A strange type of writing is found on all vases of Asiatic style, particularly those of Rhodes. This writing is composed sometimes of points, sometimes of parallel bars, grouped from 1 to 9. It approaches

13 Outside the numbers 3, 7, and 12, the number 5 was particularly sacred among the Celts, as were its multiples: 10, 20, 50, 150 (3 × 50), 350 (7 × 50), and 400 (20 × 20). Periods of 5 and of 20 days were the basis of the calendar; numbering was vigesimal. Some have claimed that the katunic writing of the Maya was syllabic and comprised 400 signs corresponding to 400 syllables.

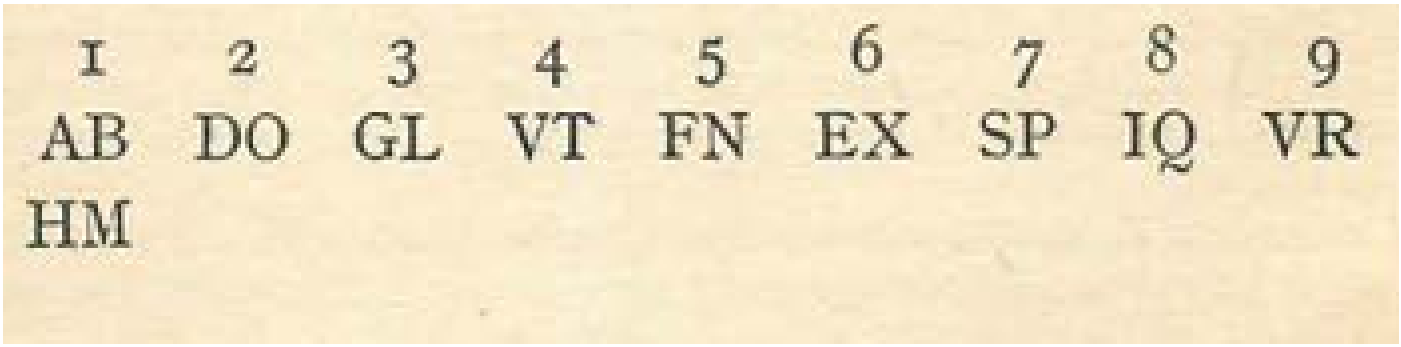
14 Cf. among the Kabbalists the symbolism of the tree and the orchard: "A great tree in the middle of paradise, whose branches, which are the sentences, extend into little branches, and into leaves, which are the letters."

Irish oghams and starts from the initial letter HAM, our M, whereas in the Cadmean alphabet the letter M corresponds to the number 3. This alphabet presents itself under two forms. One is composed of points grouped from 1 to 5 above or below a horizontal bar…"



| HM | DO | VT | EX | IQ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I | II | III | IIII | IIIII |
| I | II | III | IIII | IIIII |
| AB | GL | FN | SP | NR |

"The other, which is the most frequently employed, has no bar. It is written with the aid of points, strokes, any figures whatsoever—roses, arabesques, etc.—grouped from 1 to 9…"



| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AB | DO | GL | VT | FN | EX | SP | IQ | VR |
| HM | | | | | | | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| i | inbar | if. |
| e | eadhadle | aspen |
| u | ur | heather. |
| o | oun | broom. |
| a | ailm | fir. |
| r | ruis | elder. |
| xoust | strailhon, straif, | first devastation. |
| ug | ugedal | reed. |
| g | gort | ivy. |
| m | muin | bramble. |
| qu | queirt | apple tree. |
| c | coll | hazel. |
| t | tenne | (?). |
| d | duir or dair | oak. |
| h | hualt | hawthorn. |
| n | nuin or nion | lowland ash. |
| s | suil or sail | willow |
| f | fearann | alder. |
| l | luis | mountain ash. |
| b | beith | birch |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| i | inbar | if. |
| e | eadhadle | tremble |
| u | ur | bruyère. |
| o | oun | genêt. |
| a | ailm | sapin. |
| r | ruis | sureau. |
| xoust | strailhon, straif, premier ravage. | |
| ug | ugedal | roseau. |
| g | gort | lierre. |
| m | muin | ronce. |
| qu | queirt | pommier. |
| c | coll | coudrier. |
| t | tenne | (?). |
| d | duir ou dair | chêne. |
| h | hualt | aubépine. |
| n | nuin ou nion | frêne de plaine. |
| s | suil ou sail | saule |
| f | fearann | aulne. |
| l | luis | frêne des montagnes. |
| b | beith | bouleau |

“As can be seen, these letters are double and they were originally pronounced with their double sound. For example, L in all ancient languages is always preceded by G. These are the 9 Muses or primitive measures, which the Greeks never lost the memory of and which they never ceased to employ as a secret alphabet, which is found with the same value throughout all ancient numismatics, from Gaul to Babylon. This alphabet composed of points or parallel unconnected strokes has been preserved even among the Tuaregs under the name Klemtifinag, and it was taken up again in the Morse alphabet…

“…Certain particularities of the Maya alphabet could lead one to suppose a Berber origin. It is also close to the alphabet of the Guanches of the Canaries. The Maya alphabet offers this curious feature that all its letters are ellipses or fragments of ellipses (calculiform writing), and most of its letters are formed of points arranged like those of our dominoes. The Berber alphabet is composed of juxtaposed bars varying from one to four… at first glance, the Maya alphabet greatly resembles the dotted alphabet of Gaulish coins… writing was known from one end of America to the other and everywhere belonged to the same system proceeding from quipus or knotted cords, which are known to have preceded graphic writing in China. This writing proceeds from an arithmetic notation of language. In this system, hieroglyphs or rebuses serve only to render grammatical forms impossible to note arithmetically. It has as its base the 20 digits of a base-20 numbering system, which is at the same time the number of days of the month. Thus American characters resemble the dice of a domino game. One finds in the West traces of this arithmetic system in the Libyan and Irish alphabets, and it is the basis of the cuneiform system…”

We reproduce opposite, after the work of Arbois de Jubainville: the primitive Irish alphabet and the god Ogmios[15], the characters of the oghamic alphabet of 20 letters.

15 *Comptes rendus de l’Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, 1st trimester 1881.

We shall conclude these notes by remarking that this alphabet does not possess the letter P, which the Irish had lost… It was given back to them, it is said, by Saint Patrick, and formed of an X, and the alphabet was thus brought to 21 letters[16]. Perhaps there would be some symbolic conclusion to draw concerning this lost and recovered letter…

16 I t has been claimed that a 22nd letter was made of a square or a circle; this is very doubtful. The letter specially consecrated to Oghmi, who gave his name to the alphabet, is the 13th (from bottom to top), the nasal guttural agma, ng.

# III

# DRUIDISM

The guardians of the Celtic tradition, charged with preserving it and transmitting it, were divided into three classes. Each of these preserved more particularly one aspect of this tradition: a religion for the people, with its beliefs, its cult, and its divinities; then an initiation into mysteries of a cosmological order, reserved for knights and nobles; finally a higher wisdom, with symbols and mysteries of a metaphysical order, taught only to a few who formed the priesthood.

Among the Gaels, these three classes were designated by the names of Bards, Files, and Druids, three terms having the meaning of "inspired" and of "seer" at different degrees. Often, the whole is designated by the name "Druidism."

At the time of Caesar, the principal center of Druidism was in Great Britain. It was there that those who wished to deepen the doctrine had to go[1]. From Great Britain, it passed rapidly into Ireland and Armorica, as is shown by megalithic monuments in these two countries. Later, Druidism was introduced into Gaul, but its importance and the role it played there have been singularly exaggerated[2]. In reality, almost nothing is known about the Gallic Druids. The field of their spiritual domain was in sum limited: they did not go beyond the Rhine, nor the Alps, nor the Pyrenees; they are even unknown south of the Garonne and east of the Rhône; in fact they were known only in "long-haired Gaul."

They came into Gaul in the second century before our era and were unknown there before that time. At the time of the Roman conquest,

1 Druidism is far older than the arrival of the Deutero-Celts (Gaels then Britons) in the British Isles; it dates from the period of the Proto-Celts (Ligurians and perhaps other earlier peoples) who knew only stone. The Deutero-Celts introduced bronze.

2 See Desjardins, *Géographie de la Gaule romaine*, vol. II, pp. 510 ff

Druidism was in full decline and was scarcely more than a memory. The Druids play no role in the war that subjected Gaul to Caesar; Vercingetorix does not call upon their intervention. As for the famous Divitiacus the Aeduan, nowhere does Caesar say that he was a Druid. Only Cicero, who had only one conversation with him, gives him this title. According to what Caesar says of him, Divitiacus was an Ovate and not a Druid.

In Gaul, the Druids are foreign "missionaries," spreading for only a short time a doctrine previously unknown, and not a secular priesthood sprung from the very heart of the country. The Gallic priests are the Gutuatri (Germanic Goth, god), "priests of divinities" equivalent to the Roman flamines; their name means "the speakers," those who invoke the gods; each was priest of a temple or a sacred grove and charged with the cult of one god. Caesar, and many others with him, confuse the eubages, the ovates, and the bards with the druids properly so called. There were druids in Armorica, but not in Gaul. Still less were there druidesses. It does not seem, moreover, that Gallic women ever played an important role in the religious domain. In any case, if there were truly sorceress virgins on the Gallic island of Sena, nothing allows one to suppose, not only that they were druidesses, but even that they had the slightest relation with Druidism. According to Salomon Reinach, in no text is there any mention of sacred virgins among the Gauls. Women, married or not, do not seem to have played any role in the Gallic religion of Roman times. Prophetesses, objects of universal respect, were numerous among the Germans; there is no mention of them among the Gauls. The "druidesses" mentioned in Gaul from the third century onward are fortune-tellers having nothing in common either with the druids or with the holy women of Germania.

The famous island of Sena of Mela, which is always invoked in connection with the "druidesses," is no doubt that where, according to a widespread opinion, Ulysses is said to have landed to evoke the shades and consult an oracle. An opinion current in Roman times placed this island at the extremity of Armorica. It is no doubt the same as the island of Aeaea where Circe the magician and her nymphs dwell. Before Mela,

Strabo spoke of an island of women devoted to the cult of Dionysus and situated opposite the mouth of the Loire. It is, moreover, probable that, in a phase of Gallic religion unknown to us and prior to our texts, there were priestesses and prophetesses in Gaul as in Germania, but they had nothing in common with Druidism.

Everything that is said about Gallic Druidism in reality relates to the bards and the eubages. The mode of election of the so-called archdruid, which was most often decided by the sword, clearly shows that it can concern only the holders of royal initiation. As for their annual meeting in the land of the Carnutes, which some have wished, without sufficient proof, to identify with Chartres, it seems more likely that it was in the territory of the Aedui, which is indeed situated in the middle of Gaul. And it is, we repeat, only a question of the eubages.

As for the Druids, their domain was certainly in Armorica and their center at Karnak: “Whatever may be the true Carnutum of the ancients,” writes La Tour d’Auvergne in his Origines Gauloises, “the most striking indications seem to come together to confer also upon ancient Armorica the honor of a druidic gathering place like that of which Caesar speaks… This region was always regarded as the privileged land of the Druids… a constant tradition among the Bretons is that the region of Karnak was principally devoted to the cult rendered by Celtic priests to their divinities… One may conjecture with sufficient plausibility that the place chosen by the Druids of Armorica and by those of the British Isle for their common meeting and for their general assemblies was Karnak.”

For his part, Baraillon, in his Recherches sur les peuples Cambiovicenses, admits that “it was there without doubt (at Karnak) the place of the general assembly of all the druids of Gaul… The Carnutes formed part of the Armorican nations. Moreover, the stones of Karnak alone prove this truth… It was there the city of the Carnutes, who set the example for their neighbors, who had great power over the other nations of Armorica, and this doubtless because of the assembly which, each year, took place in their land.”

Let us return to the internal constitution of Druidism. Deutero-Celtic society was divided into three classes: the people, the clerics, and, intermediary between the two, the class of free men or nobles. The clerics were devoted to study, to sacerdotal functions, and to magistracy. Caesar gives them the general name of druids, but Strabo, Diodorus, and Timagenes distinguish three different degrees. These are as they are found in Ireland and in Celtic countries: the Bards, the Files, and the Druids.

The bards were poets who sang the great deeds of illustrious men, accompanying themselves with a sort of five-stringed lyre called cruithen in Irish and crwth in Welsh. They composed epics and lyric poems; they were genealogists and historians, successive depositaries of legends and heroic traditions. They were surrounded by high consideration. By their poems, they assured a long future of glory to the brave who had perished in battle; often moreover, when armies were drawn up in battle array, face to face, swords drawn and lances poised, the bards advanced into the middle and appeased the warriors by the charm of their songs.

They did not write sacred poems and were ignorant of the mysterious oghamic writing, but their poems and songs were composed according to traditional rules on fundamental themes written in the form of "triads."

In Ireland as well as in Wales[3], one finds the "cauldron" (coire in Irish, peire in Welsh) associated with the bards. They are the "singer-smiths." The cauldron is suspended by nine chains; opposite each of these chains stands a man armed with a lance; each of these men places the tip of his lance into a hole made at the end of the chain in front of him, then these nine men sing a poem; the assistants place into the cauldron the payment they give them. These nine men are called in Irish cerdi-s, a word that means at once "poet" and "copper-worker"; they themselves have made their cauldron before singing around it. The Welsh bards call their

3 Cf. Arbois de Jubainville: "Les bardes en Irlande et dans le pays de Galles," Revue Historique, 1898.

poetry Kerd and thus merge with the singer-smiths of Ireland.

Whereas in Ireland the Files arrogated to themselves the greater part of the functions and privileges of the bards, these latter, in Wales, long preserved their traditional organization. Their legislation, their rules, their triads, as well as bardic legends and tales, were written down, and the manuscripts carefully preserved. These manuscripts disappeared only at the time of Cromwell, who destroyed everything he could find of them. What remains to us today is only a small part but is nonetheless very interesting. The Welsh bards were divided into two rival schools: that of Caer-Marthen (North Wales) and that of Glamorgan (South Wales)[4].

In Ireland, the bards were much degenerated. They wrote in free verse, according to their fancy, without concern for the laws of versification. Most of their prerogatives, as we have said, had passed to the Files. The bards there were very small folk, little regarded and without great influence. The same was true of the Gallic bards. They were sorts of "griots" living at the expense of the great whom they flattered; they sang those who paid them, distributing praise and blame according to the interest of the latter, delivering the eulogy of their patrons as much before large assemblies as privately before anyone who desired it. Perhaps they were placed by the druids or the files with kings and chiefs of the nobility under the pretext of honoring them, but in reality in order to watch them.

The second class of clerics is that of the "files." This word (Breton gwelout, to see) means "seers." The files occupy themselves with scrutinizing and interpreting the mysteries of nature, all that belongs to the cosmological domain and constitutes the "lesser mysteries." They are called on the continent "eubages" and "vates"[5]. Caesar speaks of them under the name of druids, but what he reports of them clearly shows that it is a matter of vates and not of druids properly so called.

4 Welsh neo-bardism, if it is not the direct continuation of ancient bardism, is at least deeply imbued with Celtic spirit, and its manifestations are not without interest. As for Armorican neo-bardism, infested by politics, it cuts a poor figure beside its ancestor.

5 In some authors, Ueles; in the feminine Ueleda, "she who sees", which became Veleda, then Velleda.

In Ireland, there were nine classes of files; above them a single chief, in Irish Ollam, whom Caesar calls the Archdruid. The number of servants attached to the person of a file varies according to the importance of the class to which he belongs. The Ollam had to know by heart the 350 sacred poems; he had 30 servants, later reduced to 24. The importance of the files increased in Ireland at the expense both of the bards and of the druids who on that island were no longer anything but magicians occasionally making war.

Alongside the nobles who hold royal power, the files hold sacerdotal power. They are, according to their class, sacrificers, diviners, composers, singers of epic poems, magistrates, etc. Everything obeys them, outwardly at least. To them belongs the administration of justice; under the name of brehons[6], that is to say "judges," they maintained themselves in Ireland until the twelfth century. They alone possessed the divinatory rites. In Gaul, according to Diodorus of Sicily, "by observation of birds and of immolated victims, they predict the future and make themselves obeyed by the entire people. Especially when they wish to foresee important events, they observe a strange and incredible rite. After having sprinkled a man with libations, they strike him on the chest with the sword, then they observe how he falls, what convulsions agitate his limbs, how the blood flows; it is from these signs that they predict the future. They have in this matter an old and long series of observations in which they have confidence"[7].

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6 In Old Irish, bretemon, judges (from breta, judgment); the Gaulish word vergo-bretos is a compound whose second term is breta.

7 It is incontestable that the Gauls practiced human sacrifices. According to Caesar, they vowed human victims to the gods for their personal salvation, the life of one man alone being able to redeem that of another and appease the wrath of the gods. Those condemned to death and prisoners were sacrificed among the Gauls as among many other peoples. Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Varro affirm that the Gauls sacrificed men to Saturn. The cult of Saturn, venerated throughout the West—for example in Spain where Druidism never penetrated but where the Phoenicians long dominated—was of foreign origin. This Saturn is no doubt identical with Baal, whom some identify with Belenus. The Druids could not totally abolish bloody sacrifices, but restricted them to condemned men and prisoners. The others were replaced by voluntary bloodlettings (the Toltecs did the same). A fundamental distinction must be made, remarks S. Reinach, between human sacrifices and executions ordered and even sanctified by religion. The Druids never performed bloody sacrifices, still less human sacrifices. They presided over public and private sacrifices, but did not themselves sacrifice. This role devolved upon the mes (eubages). Criminals and prisoners were sacrificed every five years (stabbed or burned).

In Ireland, the files had three principal procedures of divination: the Imbas foros-nai, “Great science that enlightens”; the Teinm Loïda, “Light of the lyric poem,” which were forbidden by Christianity; the third alone was tolerated, it was called dichetal di chennaib cnaime, “incantation by the tips of the fingers.”

For the first procedure, the file chews a piece of the flesh of a red pig, a cat, or a dog; then he places it on the stone altar. He sings an incantation over this piece of flesh, offering it to the gods whom he thus calls. He sings again over his two hands, calling the gods and asking them that nothing come to disturb his sleep. Then he places his hands against his cheeks until he falls asleep. One keeps watch near him so that his sleep may not be disturbed; this lasts up to nine days during which he has a dream that shows him what he needs to know.

For the second procedure, one must put a thumb in one’s mouth, place a rod on the object concerning which the question is posed, then sing an incantation. A sacrifice to the gods was obligatory for this mode of divination.

The file capable of employing the third procedure walked, in the Christian period, on an equal footing with kings and bishops. The principal element of this procedure was the improvisation of a quatrain: no preparation was permitted; one had to compose and sing at the same time: “when the file sees from afar a man who is approaching him or who shows himself to him, he immediately makes a quatrain about him with the tip of his bones (his fingers) and with his spirit without preparation, and it is at the same moment that he sings and that he composes.” This procedure did not involve sacrifices to the gods.

Over the twelve years that his studies lasted, it was during the eighth year that the file learned these procedures of divination. The files knew all charms, not only for divination but to inflict all sorts of evils and even death upon whomever deserved it, even if he were king. Moreover, if the file pronounced an unjust incantation, immediately three enormous boils came to mar his face, a visible sign of his prevarication. The same

occurred for those who pronounced an unjust judgment; if the judge was elevated in dignity, it happened that the fruits fell from the trees in a single night and that the cows no longer gave milk[8].

The files traced the origin of their knowledge back to the supreme god, master of the world, who is at once: Dagdé, the good god; Mor, the Great; and Ruad-Rofhessa, the Lord of High Knowledge. His daughter Brigit bore the title of "female file." She married Bress, son of Elatha ("science" and "literary composition"), and from their marriage were born Brian, Iuchar, and Uar, the three gods of the arts, who had in common a son called Ecné or Wisdom (identified with Lugaid or Lug). Wisdom was father of Knowledge; Knowledge was father of Great Judgment; Great Judgment was father of Great Science; Great Science was father of Reflection, who was father of High Instruction, which itself was father of Art, which finally engendered File.

The god Dagdé was sovereign of the primitive Island of the Four Masters, the primordial Green Island. It was there that those arrived who came from the Great Land of the West, descendants of Milé son of Bélé[9].

Their principal file was Amairgen of the White Knee, son of Milé. By placing his right foot on the land of Ireland, he sang in honor of divine science which gave him a power superior to the gods, allowing him to penetrate the secrets of nature, to grasp its laws, and to govern its forces. To be master of this science was to master nature entire. This science is effective and direct Knowledge, which implies the identity of the Knower with the known objects and then with Being itself. The file who has reached this state—and who then has become a druid—is truly Knowledge clothed in a human form. He can then proclaim:

"I am Word of Knowledge,

8 Cairpré Cern-chaitt ("the cat head") was a usurper who became king of Ireland by treachery. He was punished in a terrible manner: for as long as his reign lasted, never more than one grain was seen in an ear of wheat, nor more than one fruit on a tree. He had successively two children, two monsters, whom he had drowned immediately after their birth.

9 Balar, one of the names of the god of death. See our General Overview of the Celtic Tradition. It appears that Bélé ended by being identified with Dagdé. Each of them had his files and his druids.

I am the god who creates in the head of man the fire of thought;
I am the wind that blows upon the sea,
I am the wave of the ocean,
I am the murmur of the waters,
I am the ox of seven battles,
I am the vulture upon the rock,
I am a tear of the sun,
I am the most beautiful of plants,
I am boar by valor,
I am salmon in the water,
I am lake in the plain,
I am the point of the lance that delivers battles."

The Welsh bards, Taliesin for example, place these verses in the past tense:

"I have been a tear in the air,
I have been an eagle,
I have been a tree in the thicket,
I have been a sword in the hand,
I have been a shield in battles,
I have been word in letter."

Here, it seems, there is no longer question except of symbolic metamorphoses of successive cycles.

The file, knowing all things, resolves all difficult questions: he knows the calculation of the calendar, the ages of the Sun and the Moon; astronomy has no more secrets for him: "Who is it that casts light upon the assembly on the mountain? Who will illuminate every question if not I (the file)?"

The files set down their knowledge in long poems. According to Strabo, the Celtiberians preserved in writing poems of several tens of thousands of verses. What became of them? The Saxon monks massacred several hundred Celtic monks and burned more than ten thousand manuscripts

on birch bark written in runic characters… Yet these poems are not entirely lost to us, for they form the foundation of the Scandinavian Edda. Edda means “ancient thing,” “ancestress,” consequently the same meaning as Purāṇa; moreover, the subjects treated are the same. The redaction of the Eddas is recent, but they make use of very ancient elements.

Much later, in the first centuries of the Christian era, the files wrote the Irish epics which are known to us only through much later summaries in which ancient traditions are mixed with Christian elements. The same is true of the romances of chivalry of Wales, whose redaction is still later.

The Irish epics can be classified into four categories. The first comprises epic compositions relating to the most ancient history of the gods and to the origin of man and of the world: this is the mythological cycle. Then come the two heroic cycles: that of King Conchobar and of the hero Cuchulainn, and that of Find, son of Cumall and father of Ossin or Ossian. Finally, a certain number of pieces relating to more recent events.

At the time of the preaching of Saint Patrick in Ireland, the files were his best auxiliaries against the degenerate druids. The files converted to Christianity and many became monks. These were the famous Irish monks who alone for long centuries kept the intellectual torch in Western Europe. The seventh and eighth centuries of our era were the golden age of Irish literature, and at the same time Greek and Latin letters were cultivated with marvelous ardor and success. The two literary cultures, one indigenous, the other Greco-Latin of Christian importation, flourished side by side in perfect understanding: “One would be wrong,” says Arbois de Jubainville, “to believe that in Ireland there existed between scholars devoted to classical letters or to theology, then their inseparable associate, and men of letters devoted to the cultivation of national literature, the almost impassable line of separation that one observes during the Middle Ages on the Continent.”

“Druidism is like the Sphinx of the fable: it has devoured all those who

have attempted to wrest its secret from it. The Sphinx guards its enigma." Such is the conclusion of Valroger in concluding his book Les Celtes; one can only agree with him. Almost everything that has been said about the druids and their doctrines is only conjectural reconstruction if not pure fantasy, all the more so since almost everything attributed to them belongs in fact to the bards and the files. We shall content ourselves with reporting here what has appeared to us the most plausible.

First of all, what is the origin of this name? Following Pliny, the great majority of authors have derived the word druid from the Greek word drus, "oak." But a Celtic word cannot derive from a Greek word. Druid comes from two Celtic roots: dru-uid, literally "strongly seeing." The Greek equivalent is philosopher, "friend of Wisdom"; the Latin equivalent magister sapientiae, "master in wisdom." From the root dru, "strong," "vigorous," "powerful," "compact," come the Greek drus, "oak" (Gaulish derno, Welsh derw), and the French adjective dru. Uid means "to see," "to know." The druids are the "seers" of whom the Basque Chaho speaks. Druid is the equivalent of the Hebrew word ro'eh, "seer," the most ancient term under which the Bible designates the Prophets. The Druids swear among the Celts what the Prophets swear among the Hebrews.

According to Diogenes Laërtius, philosophy arose among the barbarians: the first philosophers were, in India the Gymnosophists (the Brahmins), among the Persians the Magi, in Assyria the Chaldeans, among the Celts the Druids. All willingly frequent dense forests and devote themselves there to profound meditations on divinity, man, and nature, on the problems of life and death. The druids had disciples rather than pupils; they taught in secret in caves situated in the midst of forests. The principal object of their teaching was, according to the ancient authors, theology, philosophy, and astronomy. According to Strabo, they were reputed to be the most just of men. In addition to natural philosophy and moral philosophy, they studied divine philosophy, and ancient authors note and praise their high metaphysical speculations.

The teaching of the druids was transmitted orally. It takes all the presumptuous ignorance of a primary-school pupil to dare reproach them for having written nothing and to consider this a proof of inferiority, for it was the same for a long time in all traditions. The only points of their doctrine that were known externally were the immortality of the soul (which, incidentally, is very vague) and the destruction of the world by water and by fire:

"They taught that death is only a displacement and that life continues with its forms and its goods in another world, the world of the dead, which governs the dead and renders the living. It is a world of life constituting a reservoir of available souls. A constant and circulating capital of souls is distributed between the two paired worlds, and exchanges between the two are made life by life, soul by soul. But on the other hand, it seems that the capital of souls is not limited to the human species and that souls pass by migration from one species to another. The druids seem to have believed in metempsychosis, traces of which are found in myths and tales[10]."

This teaching is identical to that of Pythagoras, although the latter taught outwardly only metempsychosis and metensomatosis, whereas the druids added that the highest part of the being goes into an "other world" and never returns to this one. This "other world" is the celestial world, the world of the gods, which one ends by placing simply in another place of this earth identified with the "land of the Gods," the Sacred Island[11]. The entire noble caste among the Celts professed this doctrine.

It is known that the Celts threw into the flames of cremation pyres letters that the deceased was to carry to their dead relatives or friends, and that on the other hand they lent one another sums of money

10 Hubert, *Les Celtes à l'époque de la Tène et la civilisation celtique,* pp. 281 and 59.

11 According to Egyptian doctrine, definitive admission into this marvelous country took place only after a favorable judgment upon the dead. This doctrine of posthumous judgment seems to have been foreign to the Celts; it was introduced, not without effort, into Ireland by Christianity (Arbois de Jubainville, Les Druides, p. 134).

repayable in the other life, which is incompatible with reincarnation, generously attributed to the Celts as to other peoples.

The druids formed a sort of religious congregation. It is possible that there were two classes, one living in the depths of the forests, guarding the mysteries and the initiation, the other mingling more often with the people. It is probable that the druids were clothed in white; perhaps some among them wore crossed purple bands upon this white garment. Only the druids pronounced death sentences and presided over executions as over all public and private sacrifices. It seems moreover that this was in order to yield to the desires of the people, but that they did not play in the ceremonies a preponderant role (the files were sacrificers). Diodorus says that the custom was that no one made a sacrifice without a philosopher, for it was believed necessary to use the intermediary of these men who knew the nature of the gods and spoke the same language as they, in order to offer them sacrifices of thanksgiving and to implore their blessing. Certain authors have claimed that the druids offered bread and wine in sacrifice.

It is certainly the druids who, before the invasion of the Goidels, directed the construction of megalithic monuments:

"The construction of megalithic monuments is intelligible only under the hypothesis of a religious aristocracy exercising an almost absolute power over a numerous population. A rather discredited theory wanted this aristocracy to be the order of the Druids… this theory must be taken up again. If one continues to exclude it, one will arrive at the following conclusion, whose oddity suffices to show the error: at the time when the great dolmens of Armorica were erected, there existed a religious aristocracy of which history says nothing, but whose influence is attested by the monuments; at a later epoch, history speaks of a powerful religious aristocracy, but there remains not the slightest vestige of its action… All the arguments that have been advanced against the Celtic character of the dolmens remain valid; all those by which one has tried to place them in relation with the Druids are no less good"[12].

12 Salomon Reinach, "L'art plastique en Gaule et le Druidisme," Revue celtique, April 1892. The Celts

The druids practiced divination by numbers and pebbles and by four yew rods bearing oghamic characters. They were also physicians, or at least alone knew certain remedies. Much has been said of the sacred plants they used; it seems that they were ten in number. Many lists have been given; here is one[13]:

1. White mistletoe (Viscum album), exclusively that of the sessile oak, which is exceedingly rare. Oak mistletoe was the symbol of Sapience and was used to prepare the drink of immortality[14].

2. Vervain (Verbena officinalis), herb for all ills, herb of double sight, attractive herb, long regarded as a panacea.

3. Crimson clover (Trifolinus), but exclusively specimens with five leaves, extremely rare. Powerful talisman.

4. Black henbane (Hyoscyamus niger), herb of the dead, doubtless the famous belen of the druids.

5. Circaea (Circaea lutetiana), herb of enchantresses, herb of fairies.

6. St. John's wort (Hypericum perforatum), devil-chaser, herb of Saint John, which preserves from spells.

7. Stramonium (Datura stramonium), herb of the devil, herb of sorcerers.

8. Marjoram, doubtless bastard marjoram (Cypripedium calceolum), lady's slipper.

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referred to here are those whom we call the "Deutero-Celts."

13 *Intermédiaire des chercheurs et des curieux*, 15 March 1901, col. 466, article signed El-Kantara.

14 Pliny describes in detail the ceremony of the gathering of mistletoe among the Gauls. On the sixth day of the new Moon, the priest clothed in white climbs the tree and cuts with a sickle, aurea, the mistletoe which is received on a white cloth. One then immolates two white bulls whose horns are bound for the first time. Gold being unable to cut mistletoe, a very woody plant, it has been proposed to read not aurea, "of gold," but aerea, "of bronze." This is much more plausible.

PLATE IV.

Dolmen of Crueuno.

9. Solomon’s seal (Polygonatum convallaria), seal of Solomon, plant of long life.

10. White water lily (Nymphaea alba).

The ten medicinal plants were, it seems:

1. Mugwort.

2. Burdock.

3. Heather.

4. Chamomile.

5. Couch grass.

6. Ground ivy.

7. Clubmoss.

8. Orchis.

9. Samolus.

10. Sage.

The emblems of the druids were, according to Owen Morgan:
– at the spring equinox: the clover;
– at the summer solstice: the oak;
– at the autumn equinox: the ear of wheat;
– at the winter solstice: the mistletoe.

Druidism, Caesar informs us, originated in Great Britain. We have no information about the druids of that country, but they were certainly established there long before the time of the Roman conqueror.

The druids are the heirs, the continuators of the priests of Hyperborean Apollo who had to leave the Sacred Island and came to a place "where the longest day is double the shortest day," that is to say, south of England. The British Isles (like Armorica) were then inhabited by proto-Celtic populations: Kaldes, Caledonians, Dicaledones. According to legends reported by Gottfried Higgins, druidism and other traditions resulted from the dismemberment of a vast theocratic empire[15] whose center was in the Himalayas and which extended to the opposite seas of China and Great Britain.

In this proto-Celtic period, the druids were "priest-kings." During invasions coming from the North and the North-East, the druids gradually withdrew toward the mountains of northern Great Britain[16]. They remained there for a long time. At the beginning of our era, most naturally became Christians and formed those mysterious Culdee monks, themselves very poorly known. As for the unconverted druids, their influence declined rapidly.

During a war against the Romans, Trather son of Trunmor, ancestor of the famous Fingal, having been named generalissimo of the Caledonian armies, refused at the end of the campaign to relinquish his office, as was the rule, and despite the pressing orders of the druids. A war followed in which the druids and their supporters were defeated. They received aid from the Scandinavians, but their efforts to recover were vain. They were forced to withdraw to the islands of the northwest, where they existed until the arrival of Saint Columba in the sixth century, the time of their extinction. The Culdees, who were anchorites, disappeared shortly thereafter; as for the Celtic monks, who were cenobites, they still existed several centuries later.

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15 Certain persons having had the extreme kindness to concern themselves with our modest person in order to inquire into our "political opinions," we take the opportunity to say: 1° that it is permissible for anyone to have none; 2° that theocracy is not a "political opinion"; 3° that theocracy is not suited to all epochs nor to all peoples.

16 The Gaelic peoples (Deutero-Celts) knew bronze. They supplanted the race that preceded them (Proto-Celts), which was still only at the age of polished stone. This occurred about thirteen centuries before our era. Later came the Britons, seven or eight centuries afterward. Around 300 before our era, a Gallic invasion brought iron to the British Isles. The druids imposed their domination upon both.

How did the druids live? “In Ireland as in Gaul, they lived like everyone else. They exercised the right of individual property and were married. Each lived in his house with wife and children, to whom one or perhaps a few resident pupils could be added. The druids Mail and Caplait each had living with him a daughter of the supreme king Loegaire, contemporary of Saint Patrick. Each had taken charge of the education of one of these two young persons. But nowhere do we see that Cathbu lodged and fed the hundred pupils to whom he gave instruction[17].”

But the Irish druids were much degenerated. Certain indications allow one to think that among the Carnutes (the forest of the Carnutes covered almost all of Armorica) and in Great Britain, at least some of them lived very withdrawn lives. Lucan says that they inhabited only deep forests where their sacred groves were hidden. Mela says that they concealed their teaching in caves and the most unknown clearings. According to Ammianus Marcellinus, they devoted themselves in profound retreats to the study of speculative sciences. But it is probable that only a few lived thus the eremitic life. Did the greater part of them live in confraternities? This is very probable, for Timagenes, who was well informed, says that they lived in communities subject to a general rule[18].

Celtic society governed by the druids was, let us repeat, a theocracy[19] which Alexandre Bertrand very ingeniously compared to the theocracy of Tibet. But it is among the Pythagoreans that one would find the most analogies; Timagenes and Posidonius, and after them Ammianus Marcellinus and Diodorus of Sicily, had already pointed this out. Pythagoras—who according to Aristotle had been surnamed the “Hyperborean Apollo”—was the heir and successor of the Thracian Orpheus[20]; one of the disciples of Pythagoras, Zamolxis, was a Gete.

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17 Arbois de Jubainville, Les Druides, pp. 114–115.

18 Timagenes, whose works are unfortunately lost, had, Ammianus Marcellinus tells us—who often cites him—renewed science by drawing upon a great number of books dealing with the Celts, and had been initiated into the tradition of the druids.

19 Not in Gaul, where the druids never had much influence, nor in Ireland, where the warrior caste dominated.

20 On Pythagoreanism, see the work of Chaignet, already old but still interesting, and the more recent works of Delatte, Carcopino, and above all Matila Ghyka.

Between the Hyperboreans, the Celts, the Dacians, and the Chaldeans, there are close links which denote the same traditional origin.

# CONCLUSION

All modern authors who have attempted to reconstruct the doctrines of the druids have taken as their point of departure the traditions of the bards of Wales. Now, even assuming that the documents on which they rely are authentic and have been transmitted to us integrally and without any mixture of foreign influences, we would still have only traditions reserved for the bards. Likewise, the Scandinavian and Irish epics contain only the traditions of the files.

To attempt the reconstruction of druidic doctrines is a hazardous undertaking which we shall not attempt; one can nevertheless form an idea of the most general data.

The Western forms of the unique Tradition place the emphasis on the knowledge of Man, the link between God and the World. Every cycle divides naturally into 2, 3, 4, and 6 parts. For present humanity, we have seen above the division into six periods: the Boar, the Bear, the Ram, the Bull, the Horse, the Sow. The division into two corresponds to that of day and night, symbolized by Apollo and Saturn. The division into four is the best known; it is reported by Hesiod, Aratus, and Ovid: the Golden Age is the age of justice; men live without working and share the natural riches of the earth; there are neither laws, nor commerce, nor cities, nor weapons, nor agricultural tools. The Silver Age already marks a decline; the first dwellings are built; one is obliged to work, to plough; iniquity begins. In the Bronze Age, the race is warlike and ferocious; weapons are made; animals are eaten. It is the age of heroes. The Iron Age is the age of pain and misery, of impiety and injustice; property, commerce, mining labor are known; there is no longer any remedy for the evils of men.

In the division into three periods, these are symbolized by the Sun, the Moon, and Mercury. The Mercurial period begins about 2500 years before our era. During this age, temples are erected and the Sacred

Books are written. The guardians of the Tradition leave the Sacred Island; three new centers are constituted: one among the Celts, one among the Dacians, one among the Chaldeans.

Mercury is the luminous ray of the sun, intermediary between that star and the earth; it is Sapience, Intelligence, Sophia, Buddhi. It is Woden, Odin, Wotan, symbolized by the Dragon, winged serpent: bird-winged, good serpent; bat-winged, evil serpent. Among the Gaels, it is Lugaid; among the Britons, it is Lug: "Lug is the Gallic Mercury; he is the radiance of the Sun; his name means Light; he is the same as the Welsh hero Lleu. By certain traits he approaches Apollo, by others Mercury. If he recalls Mars, the resemblance is only superficial. His superiority in war is due to his intelligence, his skill, his genius, and not to his strength and his courage. He is the god of unions and games[1]." One may relate Lug to Logos[2] and to the dragon Long of Far Eastern tradition[3]. It is the divine Word expressed in Names, Numbers, and Forms, the luminous Ray which progressively descends toward fallen Earth and manifests there as a man, incarnates in the Virgin as the luminous ray from the Sun forms, at the focus of a perfect mirror, a perfect image of the Sun. Several important megalithic monuments are erected at the time when Orpheus sings his poems and when Moses writes his Torah.

Druids and Prophets await the coming of the Messiah[4]. After the Ascension, two churches are constituted: one in the East, the Chaldean Church[5], the other in the West, the Celtic Church, both directly attached to the Mother Church of Jerusalem. The Holy Grail is the link between them. The legend of the Holy Grail encloses the entire druidic doctrine revived by Christianity. The Lord wrote a word upon the sacred chalice, and this word is the Word rediscovered, the key to all Sapience.

This is to say that there can be no question, when one envisages a

1 J. Loth, "Le dieu Lug," Revue archéologique, September–December 1914.

2 Ogmê seems indeed identical with Lug.

3 Cf. Matgioi, La Voie métaphysique.

4 This is in no way an allusion to the Virgo Parituræ, a legend of the tenth century and perhaps even of the fourteenth.

5 Incorrectly called the "Nestorian Church"; the term "Chaldean Church" being taken by the Nestorians who were attached to the Church of Rome.

traditional restoration of the West, of reviving Druidism, since what could subsist of it and what was assimilated in the Middle Ages by Christianity was necessarily carried along in the destiny of the Christian tradition.

**T. BASILIDE.**

# WORKS TO CONSULT

We indicated, at the beginning of our work, the few articles to which one may refer for the study of Celtism from the traditional point of view. We believe we are rendering a service to certain readers by pointing out to them the principal scholarly works in which they will be able to find the details that we had neither the intention nor the space to mention here:

H. d'Arbois de Jubainville: *Cours de littérature celtique*,
12 vols., octavo, Thorin–Fontemoing, 1880–1900.

G. Dottin: *Manuel pour servir à l'étude de l'antiquité celtique*,
duodecimo, Champion, 1915.

H. Hubert: *Les Celtes et l'expansion celtique jusqu'à l'époque de la Tène and Les Celtes à l'époque de la Tène et la civilisation celtique,*
2 vols., small octavo, nos. 21 and 21 bis of the collection *L'évolution de l'humanité,* Paris, 1932.

Simon Pelloutier: *Histoire des Celtes*,
2 vols., sextodecimo, 1750.

Roget de Belloguet: *Ethnogénie gauloise,*
4 vols., small octavo, 1870–1873.

Alexandre Bertrand: *La Religion des Gaulois. Les Druides et le Druidisme,*
octavo, Leroux, 1897.

Arbois de Jubainville: *Les Druides*,
duodecimo, Champion, 1906.

V. Tourneur: *Esquisse d'une histoire des études celtiques*, octavo, Liège,

1905.

Ch. Ruelle: *Bibliographie générale des Gaules*,
2 vols., octavo, 1885.

**T. BASILIDE.**

# CABIRIC SYSTEM OF THE ANCIENT IRISH

## According to M. Pictet[1]

Knowledge of the Cabiric system of the Irish, described by M. Pictet, is so indispensable not only for attaining an understanding of the religion of the Gauls—precisely filling some of its most important gaps—but also for the formation of the theory of religions in general, that I cannot refrain from casting a glance backward and departing somewhat from my subject in order to present a rapid outline of it.

If this were the place to treat specifically of the religion of this Celtic family, one would have to represent this holy island, at the center of which rises the mountain of Ouisnéach, chief seat of worship and residence of the priests, who maintained there the sacred fire, visited by the Gaelic Hu, Bath or Baoth, who assumes the most famous fabulous appearances in religions, divides hermaphroditically into Bath and Eire, then subdivides into two triads, one male and the other female; the voyage of Bath, who departed from Spain to land in Ireland; his death caused by the jealousy of foreign kings nevertheless regarded as his brothers; the return of his corpse to Spain, whence his avengers hasten to punish the murderers; all these mythical features, beneath a historical envelope of more or less doubtful reality, reveal, beyond all doubt, a religious system of high importance, and worthy of being compared to those that are the most celebrated; but the system of the Irish Cabires surpasses all the rest.

The supreme God of the Gauls or Gaels is ineffable; he was called A E, the He, that is to say Being par excellence. He was also given the name

1 We reproduce here Chapter II of a work printed in 200 copies and which has become very rare, by Th. Prosper Le Blanc: Étude sur les symbolisme druidique, Paris, 1849. This book can be considered one of the best contributions to the study of Celtic tradition.

Comdhia, the God one and multiple; which may be understood either of a pantheistic divinity that contains within its unity all gods and all spirits, or of a triad, the term Comdhia having formerly been used to designate the Christian Trinity.

Indeed, several secondary divinities divide into three personalities, and one of them has taken the name Threide or Three-Gods, which must lead one to suppose a sort of trinity similar to that of the Buddhists, the Taoists, or the Platonists. Another indication of the Irish trinity is to be observed on the monument of Drogheda: these are three spiral lines that were later employed as a symbol of the Christian Trinity; which proves that the first apostles of Christianity on this island found sufficient resemblance between the trinity they proclaimed and that of the Irish to believe themselves authorized to apply to the one the symbol that had always been attributed to the other.

The other names of God or of the persons of the triad are: the Magnificent, the Strong, wise and good, the High One, the Great Head, which recalls the Great Face of the Kabbalists; Jonn, which seems Iberian; and Monn or Mann, a name that recalls Germanic Mann, Indian Manu, Egyptian Menes, Cretan Minos, Polynesian Mano, American Manitou.

The divine personality that manifests outside the superior and infinite sphere is Samhan, the minister of the absolute God. This name signifies “similar to the sun”; and this term of comparison, which excludes any identification of the god with the king of the stars, is an energetic denial addressed to Dupuis. A singular refutation of the hierophant of atheism and of his twelve large volumes! A single word, imagined four or five thousand years ago by a barbarian priest, suffices to overturn his theory in what it has of most fundamental!

Samhan, who is probably one of the persons of the supreme triad, is God, chief of the associated gods, just as the world presides over the elements, and the year over the months. He is thus creator and creature at once, master of all things and servant of the unknown God who gives

the world movement, life, and beauty. He is the king of souls whom he guides through the spheres, whom he judges in the west, and whom he brings back to God or punishes in the hells under a terrifying form that has caused him to receive the names Bâl-Sab, or lord of death, or evil spirit.

Most savage peoples have preserved only the memory of this God, who alone is active. They have divided him into two personalities: one beneficent and celestial, the other infernal and feared, which sacrifices aim to disarm. Travelers, preoccupied with the idea that the cults of brutish peoples are a kind of instinctive deism, have imagined that they worship the evil principle. But their beliefs are far more complex and much less absurd.

The name Bâl-Sab proves that Bâl, Bêl, or Béal is the same as Samhan. Bâl is the personification of the sacred fire made sensible, which resides at the center of the world. The year, work of Samhan-sun, was called the harmony of Béal.

Samhan is therefore a metaphysical god incorporated into the world and the sun, fundamental symbols that designate the moral and sacred world of national and religious society. This very pure society, one in Samhan, multiple in its worshippers, was represented more particularly by the association of the twelve Cabires. Thus Samhan was indeed that idol which a king of Ireland worshipped under the name Head of all the gods. Magnificently clothed and adorned with gold and silver, twelve small bronze figures surrounded it, respectfully inclined.

These are the twelve Cabires, represented by circles of rough stones, whose apparent crudeness is proof of a reasoned distancing, in matters of religion, from what is purely human.

The twelve gods danced a round called the magic of Samhan, because the succession of times and years, generations and revolutions of the sphere, are the effect of the power that Samhan has drawn from his divine nature. This sphere will be described more fully in connection

with the more detailed religion of the Gauls. It will suffice to say that it is oblique, that the north approaches the zenith and the south the nadir: so that the eastern part, half dark and half luminous, is inhabited by six gods whom the divine movement carries toward the boreal pole; while the western part, inhabited by six goddesses, is carried toward the austral pole, abode of death.

1° At the lower extremity of the world and of the sphere, at the austral pole, inclined toward the nadir, dwells Axire: the mother of the gods and consequently of men.

Axire is evidently the same as the Axieros of the Greek mysteries: M. Pictet proves it superabundantly. One may see in his learned work the surprising affinities that exist between her various names and those of the mother goddesses of Italy, Phrygia, and Phoenicia.

Axire is the mystical cave, the inhabitant of deep, dark, and chaotic places, the obscure moon, the earth, mother of the infant sun. She merges with the immense and primitive waters; she is the point of departure of the male Cabires, the term of the female Cabires.

She is the symbol of profanes full of poverty, obscurity, and unsatisfied desires, from whose midst the initiates are drawn as from the bosom of a flood. She is the mother of the assembly of the gods, whom their union with Samhan, a spirit similar to the Sun, has divinized.

Thus must one understand that Axire is the primordial and sterile waters, the hibernal earth, which becomes fertile in its obscure and heavy elements only through the influence of celestial and divine fire. Her dwelling was figured by the subterranean cave of Drogheda. One arrived there by a narrow corridor, and the central cavity, or stone chest, was flanked, in the direction of the three other cardinal points, by alcoves or chapels that figured a cosmic cross, and before which were three altars, probably consecrated to the divinities that composed the triad.

There was found there an earthen basin in which were calcined bones, probable remains of some human sacrifice performed during the celebration of unknown mysteries.

2° After Axire–February appears Aesar–March, who presides over the first month of the year. It is the warmth of spring that is born from winter; it is the new earth that emerges from the waters of the flood; it is the great year whose birth is given by chaos, by death and hell; it is the intellectual and principial fire deposited by heaven in the bosom of the disorder of Axire. Aesar is the first of the six male gods ascending in the east. The same as the Etruscan Aesar, he is not, as has been believed, the first or the chief of the gods, but the first link of the Cabiric chain. It is he who gives to the associates the ascending impulse that is communicated to the whole line, until the mystical round, abandoned by the magical energy of Samhan, returns upon itself, and descends in the west, through the six dwellings, the path that the masculine line had ascended in the east. By virtue of this movement of rotation, while spring and summer advance, autumn and winter return backward toward their point of departure.

The gods and goddesses are thus placed opposite one another, constantly looking at one another, and forming a single, complete, harmonious, and indivisible assembly of divine spouses and sacred wives.

3° After Aesar, Aïn–April manifests. He is called the son of Séathar, strong, wise, and good god, a title that he certainly shares with his companions; he divides into a triad formed of Taulac, Fan, and Mollac. In general, these deities preside over fire.

4° Above Aïn appears Céaras, another god of fire; the month of May is his dwelling, placed in the east and on the horizon, at the place from which the rising sun illuminates the earth. One reads in the Confession of Saint Patrick that at the time when Christians celebrated the feast of Easter, in the midst of the night, all the Irish extinguished their fires until one saw shine an immense pyre lit outside the city of Tara where there was a great gathering of chiefs and magicians.

This fire is that of Aïn, which Céaras makes rise to the horizon. It shines first in the midst of night, in the lower hemisphere, then gives birth to the divine day upon the earth that it illuminates from afar, which was designated by the care taken to light it outside the holy city.

Céaras is a revealer, but in the person of Oghma, his brother.

Oghma is a civilizer, inventor of the alphabet; his children are Brid or Brit, goddess of poetry, who gave her name to the Bards, and Midr or Mithr, the rays of the sun that he projects upon the earth.

5° Higher still is Lufe, who occupies the place of the month of June; his attributes are doubtful and little known.

6° Upon Lufe is superposed the triad Géamhar, the blade of wheat; Dius, ear and constellation; and Tath, the harvest. One sees that it forms an entire small cycle. It is placed in the month of July.

7° Finally, the superior Cabire, the last male, is Néith. His house is in the north of the sphere, not far from the zenith. After the harvest of July, the month of August, free of agricultural labors, brings with it warlike expeditions: this is why Néith, like the Spanish Néton, is a god of combats.

Néith, at the culminating point of the sphere, is a Celtic Jupiter; he maintains the world under his law; and when it gradually loses its empire, the god, who has come from Aesar to Néith, descends the circle of the inferior and changing sphere. Seated at the summit of the world, he had consumed his enemies by the ardor of his fires; now the time of his decadence has arrived, he is drawn toward the west.

8° The Cabire that follows is Nath, who emerges, like Minerva or Athena whose name she bears reversed, from the forehead of Néith–Jupiter, that is to say from the summit of the sphere divided into eastern and western hemispheres. She is the goddess of science, the

personification of the arts, of wisdom, which are never cultivated with greater success than when the prolongation of security and peace, fruits of victory, introduces into the world a principle of relaxation and of future death.

9° Lower is a triad composed of Brighit, who presides, like Nath, over wisdom, but over a wisdom less elevated and more material, that of blacksmiths and physicians, because the world needs to repair its ruins and to heal its languors; Ceachd, who presides over health; and Cann, the full moon, feared for her maleficent influences, and who spreads light, although the harbinger of darkness and night.

10° On the western horizon, Aedh corresponds to November. She presides over fire, but probably over the fire that is extinguished in her dwelling. Her name signifies the eye, for the west and the east are the two eyelids of the world, which open and all is illuminated, and which, closing, plunge all nature into darkness.

11° Beneath the horizon, Céara presides over wheat like Ceres. She invented the mill and the sickle, presided over bread and the fruits of the earth. She is the provision that is consumed in December. Her daughter Porsaivean is the wheat drawn from the provision and entrusted to the earth, immediately below the horizon.

12° Still lower, Eo-Anu, who bears nearly the same name as the Gallic Onuava, is the sacred world dead and buried beneath the cold shroud of January snow. Placed between Céara and Axire, she is at once wheat like the one and mother of the gods like the other; but she truly preserves only the appearance of the goods of Céara: this is why she is called Bidghoe or Illusion, name of the Etruscan sibyl Bygoïs.

From Eo-Anu, the divine world falls back into Axire, in order to recommence the completed cycle.

It is important to remark that the two hemispheres, male and ascending, female and descending, are, in a certain sense, two lines that one may

call parallel: for there is between Néith and Nath a relation of name and position that is reproduced exactly at the other extremity between Aesar and Axire, a relation that continues indubitably between Aïn and Eo-Anu, Céaras and Céara. These are therefore two semi-circular lines of spouses whose union forms a perfect circle.

13° At the center of the god-months, at the summit of the polar mountain, navel of the world, is Bâl or Béal, the Great Head, the God-year, the dominating Samhan who gives to the association the divine character of the odd number, which is nothing other than himself.

But it is always the same Samhan who is Bidghoe or Maia in Eo-Anu, who takes a real but hidden form in Axire, whose fire is lit in Aesar, who grows in the following Cabires, accommodating himself to the needs of man under the form of his nourishment in Céara, and who becomes the principle of his warlike enthusiasm in Néith.

It is he who, in the ninth month, in the horizontal dwelling of Aedh, awaited the souls that left their bodies, made them appear before his tribunal, judged them according to the merits of their past life, admitted the just into the place of felicity and hurled the wicked into the place of torments; condemning those who, having been neither good nor wicked, had not accomplished the measure of a full life, to recommence their terrestrial existence.

These latter, subjected to transmigration, were probably still the non-initiated, whom even the sacrifice of a black sheep could not expiate.

What was this initiation? It is impossible to answer this question, since the notions are lacking. I must therefore confine myself to causing some presumptions to arise.

Samhan, president of the cabur gods or Cabires, that is to say mutually confederated, was consequently the head of the complete body of the Tromdhe or associated gods, which was called the magic of Samhan or the harmony of Béal, whose creative unity or odd number alone could

give the divine element to the circles or congregations of eight, twelve, or one hundred mystical stones.

These gods, represented by stones whose form the hand of man had not profaned, were themselves the collective personifications of the souls that participated in their attributes, whose sum was in Samhan; for this entire system of divinities had for its inner meaning the religious and national society rendered conformable to the things of heaven and of religion.

This is not the place to prove at length this great rule of general mythics: it will suffice to observe that most of the peoples of Europe favored federations of peoples, foundations of cities or colonies in the divine number of twelve; and that the Irish priests, similar in this to those of the Cimbri and the Pelasgians, taking the names of the gods to whom they were consecrated, thus became their visible representatives, and to a certain extent their realization.

Thus the priests of Samothrace donned the insignia of Mercury, of the Demiurge, of the Sun and of the Moon, to represent the sacred mysteries that had the virtue of freeing souls.

The initiates being, from this point of view, intimately united to the divine association, which distinguished them from the profanes, a religious ceremony was necessarily required to arrive at this supernatural and magical state. It is of this initiatory ceremony that Strabo preserved a vague memory, when he says that, in an island neighboring England, the mysteries of a god whom he compares to Bacchus were celebrated.

Indeed, the mysteries of Axire necessarily had to correspond to those of the Greek Axieros; Céara and Porsaivean can only be Ceres and Persephone; how could one refuse to identify, with M. Pictet, Casmille and Cadmille with the Irish Coismaol and Cadmaol, names of priests who must, according to custom, have borne the significant names of their gods?

Now, the mysteries of Samothrace having for object the death and resurrection of Bacchus, and their fruit being for the initiates the assurance of a future life full of happiness, it is probable that the mysteries presided over by the Cadmaol or Coismaol, that is to say the holy servant or the holy bald one, by allusion to the sun captive and stripped of its rays at the winter solstice, had for object Samhan or one of his forms, Bâl-Sab, the lord of death, incorporated into the Sun humanized in some hero of unknown adventures.

These mysteries of the God-World-Sun who was to perish in the chaos Axire expressed at once the mystical death of the worshippers who were born a second time, and the end of the great year that recommenced. One of the aims of these mysteries was therefore to revive the expectation of the destruction of the world and of its symbolic signification, that is to say the future decadence and disappearance of the national religion, within impiety and wars of extermination, before it would take up a new empire, when the celestial fire, lit anew by the god victor over death and the dissolution of the Universe, would illuminate another creation.

But before this renovation, the moon, which had been only threatening in Cann, became horrible in Axire; she became Eirinn, the Greek Erinys, a frightful fury, mad with grief at the sight of her spouse, the dead Sun; a Medusa who preserves nothing of her former beauty. Following her example, the initiates gave themselves over to delirious orgies, to the furies of bacchantes, to bloody macerations; human victims, sacrificed after the example of the god, were offered to him in the midst of the night, at the bottom of sacred caverns, and their heads, deposited in the magical vessel, were buried beneath the altars.

The symbol of the butterfly, which was called the image of God, seems to lead to the same conclusions.

Samhan, in the descending Cabires, is maleficent; his emblem is the odious caterpillar weighed down by the matter of a crawling and impure

body, and which, in its movements, imitates the undulations of the water that flows in autumn and winter; he has assumed, like it, the instincts of destruction of the evil spirit; and just as it devours the green grass, symbol of life, so in his descending course, life disappears and gives way, in winter, to the complete destruction of the life of nature.

After having destroyed everything, he destroys himself; arriving at the deepest point of the empire of death and hells, he mysteriously spins his tomb in the silence of eternal night; he constructs for himself a mummy, a larva without apparent life, black and hideous like death, where life is suspended without probable hope of return. But just as the sacred fire of Aesar manifests in the depths of the darkness of Axire, the captive god breaks his bonds and his prison by virtue of his magical energy; he takes the light and brilliant form of the butterfly, emblem of a subtle spirit, of the soul freed from the bonds of the body; he no longer preserves anything of the profane form of the caterpillar, and rises, chief of the initiates, from divine dwelling to divine dwelling up to heaven, resting upon the flowers, emblems of the brilliant stars that adorn the abode of the eternal God.

**TH. PROSPER LE BLANC**

# LIST OF PICTURES

We have reproduced, outside the text, four unpublished photographs taken by our collaborator T. Basilide, representing megalithic monuments of the Morbihan:

PLATE I. — Menhir of Conguel at Quiberon, view taken from the north side. This menhir is more than six meters high.
PLATE II. — Dolmen of Mané Groee'h with four lateral chambers forming a double tau. The inhabitants of the region call it "Mountain of the Old Woman," that is to say of the "Sorceress."
PLATE III. — Dolmen of Mané Groee'h. Another aspect of the same dolmen.
PLATE IV. — Dolmen of Crueuno. The largest dolmenic chamber known.

THE EDITORIAL STAFF.

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